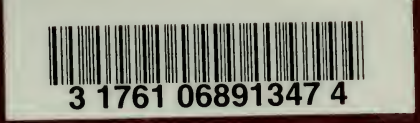
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THE NATURAL THEOLOGY OF NATURAL BEAUTY.

BY THE

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THE NATURAL THEOLOGY OF NATURAL BEAUTY.

INTRODUCTION.

BY the title of this book the author wishes to assert that there is an argument derivable from the appearances of external Nature, parallel with that from internal structure or mechanism set forth by Paley. Both point to a benevolent Creator: the latter showing that His purposes are favourable to our natural life; the former indicating His further purpose of exalting our thoughts or spiritual life. We find the world adapted to our life and comfort, and have a right to infer that a Living Creator[1] made it, and means us well in it. Then we find that, while providing for our physical life, Nature or the external world appeals through our senses to our thoughts and emotions. Our inference is, that that also is a portion of His contrivance for us, by which He means to affect our thoughts concerning Him, or, in other words, to appeal to us.

The relation between the arguments from

[1] Sir E. Beckett, 'Origin of Laws of Creation,' p. 125.

Design and from Beauty has been pointed out some little time ago, in an admirable manner, by Dr. Mozley in his Sermon on Nature. More detailed examples and illustrations of both arguments will be found in Prof. Ruskin's books, more particularly in the fourth volume of Modern Painters. It was intended to begin this book by a comparison of these later works with that of Paley; but this comparison has been placed later in the volume, for the following reasons.

It is evident that the Argument from Design did not begin with Paley, nor that from Beauty with Ruskin, since Paley seems to have followed Bernard Nieuwentyt, and Cicero certainly anticipated not only their arguments from internal structure, but those of Wordsworth, Mozley, and Ruskin from external beauty. These great Ideas, then, have a history. They have, in various forms, been part of the guiding convictions of the human race at all times. The argument from the great sights of Nature to God is found in the Old Testament Scriptures, from the Book of Job to the later Prophets. It is in the Vedas; it rises into splendour in Greek Pantheism and mythology. Cicero shows us in the 'De Natura Deorum' how well-instructed Romans adopted it from Greece: it is found in Virgil and was adopted by the Christian Renaissance: it descended to Dante and Chaucer, and

all the time it assuredly existed, and formed a part of all men's thoughts concerning themselves, their origin, and their destination.

The Argument from Design has received a new development since the employment of the Baconian Method, and the consequent vast progress of natural science. It is natural that mediate and instrumental causes should have been vigorously studied, and that, in view of the wonderful results obtained, emotions derived from the outer view of things should have seemed childish, sentimental, and useless in the pursuit of knowledge. And as the representative arts incurred during the same time the blame of irreligion and immorality, all ideas of Beauty became disconnected from Religion, which they had so long served. The consequence was that the painter's art in particular lost its significance for earnest people, and fell into a kind of disrepute, which was not dissipated by the occasional emergence of great geniuses, or the example of a few religious painters. The argument from External Beauty was silent for a time, because nobody looked for it or cared about it.

Great attention has been recalled to Natural Beauty in our days; by the school of Rousseau and Shelley, who are driven to Nature by repulsion from Society; by Wordsworth and the genuine naturalist lovers of Nature in her wilder

and freer aspects; and, particularly in our own country, by a great company of Naturalist Painters, much employed in landscape scenery. They have carried on labours parallel with those of scientific analysis, and have at length made their Art practically indispensable to science. Their works are varied and voluminous; they range from the gentlest thought and simplest technique to Michaelesque imagination and Leonardesque realization. The school has generally consisted of men who confessed the Christian faith; and who believed that in their labours they were in some degree setting forth to others the glory of God. The object of this book is to show that they were indeed doing so, and that the taste for natural beauty, which they have had the principal part in developing, leads back into the ancient paths which lead to the knowledge of God; and furnishes evidence of His purpose to guide our thoughts to Him, as the Design-argument bids us consider His care for our bodies.

Accordingly, it has been thought best to follow the order of time, and begin with the earliest references to Natural Beauty, or sublimity, in the sense of grandeur; concluding with that union of the two arguments from beauty and design which has lately been accomplished by the first prose writer of our day.

CHAPTER I.

External Nature.

§ 1. *Beauty a Spiritual Impression.*

We here assume the Theistic hypothesis of Nature. The object of this book is not so much to prove the existence of a Beneficent Creator, as to show what large classes of admitted facts are reasonably accounted for by the supposition of His existence: and how the ideas of all ages converge upon that theory. It is impossible either to ignore, or to answer at length, the modern attacks upon the Argument from Design. But this may be fairly said, that to suggest an indefinite number of intermediate processes of evolution, by no means gets rid of the designer of such evolutionary progress. It only puts Him farther and farther back into abysses of Time or duration. We may quote Sir Alexander Grant's words[1], that, setting aside the moral nature, the intellect, and the history of man, which remain whether the Darwinian hypothesis be right or not, 'There is nothing atheistical in Mr. Darwin's

[1] Contemporary Review, May, 1871, p. 275.

work; on the whole, it might be described as a system of Natural Theology founded on a new basis. And I find,' he continues, 'that we have the authority of Professor Fraser for saying that the pious philosophy of Bishop Berkeley is not incompatible with the belief that human and other animal life may have been developed from inorganic conditions.'

A theory of progressive Evolution implies a reasoning Mind, by whatever attempts at impersonal nomenclature — as Unknown Factor, Principle, and so on—we may express it. There was a reasonable purpose that eyes should be fit for seeing and ears for hearing, or the rudiment would not have developed, by a process traceable through our reason. Infinite Time alone will not make or cause anything. It is no use supposing æons of ages for the sake of their chapter of accidents, in hope of finding a First Cause intervening somehow, who is not God. Each rudimentary organ points to its own completion: and our analysis of the human or animal frame, or any part of it, must at last bring us to the matter and the Giver of Life. We may call Him Creator or Evolver: He may have made the ancestor, or caused matter to evolve that ancestor: but to Him working we must come at last, and His wisdom is manifest in every link of the great evolved series. A similar remark

applies to the use of the terms Inherent Potencies, Cosmic Force, and the like: that it is as reasonable to suppose an eternal Designer when one sees design, as an eternal Force when one sees motion.

We shall attempt an outline of that ancient argument in favour of the existence of Deity, gathered from the external beauty of the material world, which the children of men have always framed, consciously or unconsciously, and which has always influenced them in one shape or another. This Argument has of late appeared in new forms, and been set forth with perhaps unprecedented power; moreover it has been of late connected—though by no means for the first time—with the equally time-honoured inference from the internal construction of natural objects; that their mechanism implies a contriver, and their intelligence a Creative Mind or Will. The works of Dr. Mozley and Prof. Ruskin have carried forward the argument of Paley, and given it a fresh theological bearing on the human mind.

As this book is meant for popular perusal, it will not attempt great primary definitions of Nature, Beauty, Reason, Art, Imagination, and the like. It is sufficient that we claim a right to speak of the Beauty of external nature as a real phenomenon and a true experience of rational

persons, whether it be found in things animate or inanimate. We say that it is not only a collateral evidence of design or of benevolent purpose in creation, but of design to influence men's thoughts. Whether through pure pleasure, or by pleasure mixed with awe, the face of nature appeals, and has appealed since the earliest days of thought, to the thoughts of mankind, as a supplied argument for His own glory by the Creator: and, if it does this, it is evidential. And it is also to be observed that if the sense of beauty is to be put aside as evidence because it is called subjective and varies with the subject, the same thing may be said of all impressions of our senses. Everybody's sense of colour, sound, and so on is subjective; and so is everybody's conviction of truth or certainty, except perhaps in pure mathematics. The whole superstructure of science is built on the proper use of our senses, and to discredit them would destroy its foundations. In pure mathematical demonstration, a person's not arriving at a certain conclusion from certain assigned data is an evidence that he cannot properly understand and develope the data. It is no disparagement of their absolute certainty. He has had a sum to do and he has not done it right; but his doing it right would be of no value as evidence about it. It never can be a question

of evidence whether two and two are four, or a triangle has three sides or not. But in the conduct, the morals, and hopes of our life we must needs admit evidence, and can expect no more than moral certainty to act on; and this Reason helps us to attain.

§ 2. *Past and Present Arguments from Beauty.*

We take leave, therefore, to speak of an Argument from Natural Beauty, or of the Natural Theology of Natural Beauty; and to say that it is connected with, though distinct from, that Argument from Design and the mechanism of nature, which in this country will always be associated with the name of Paley. He has best stated the argument from structural design. But a further set of facts is now to be considered—that the methods and mechanism of nature 'throw off beauty,' as Dr. Mozley says, for our contemplation, while they 'work' to maintain our existence. 'Who could have told beforehand,' he continues[1], 'that those physical laws which fed us, clothed us, gave us the use of our organs and the means of life, would also create a picture?' Paley has analysed and demonstrated in the construction of things an exceeding ingenuity and excellence of benevo-

[1] Sermon on Nature, Univ. Sermons, p. 139; Rivingtons, 1876.

lent contrivance. It is a further step to trace the connexion of that excellence which we observe with the intellect, with delightfulness of exterior form, which we experience through the senses and emotions. This collateral argument is valid, though by no means new. The inference from Beauty and Sublimity is certainly as old as the Book of Job, and reappears in the Psalms and the Prophets quite often enough to show that it was an underlying idea in the Semitic mind. For the Aryan view of Beauty, an attempt will be made to trace it briefly through Greek religion and philosophy. It was at the root of Hellenic Pantheism, and found perfect expression in the art of Pheidias and his contemporaries. Again, the argument from Natural Beauty to the Divine is regularly set forth in the great Platonic conjecture, or search after God through Beauty, which forms the greater part of the dialogues called Phædrus, Hippias Major, and the Symposium. Again, it is formally stated by Cicero, who may be considered quite a Greek in his philosophical views[1]. Other references will be given in their place to show that what we call the Natural Theology of Natural Beauty has always had its place in human reflection about the world and its Creator. Still

[1] See 'De Natura Deorum,' II. xxxviii-xl, and lx. in particular.

there is no doubt that it has assumed a special importance in our own days, and it seems best to begin from some contemporary writings, before we go back on the earlier traces of our argument.

§ 3. *Modern Reasoning from Natural Beauty.*

It is much to be regretted that the late Dr. Mozley was not spared to expand his remarkable Sermon on Nature into a regular treatise; although to really careful readers it leaves very little of the subject unsaid or unsuggested. He starts from the admitted truth that a kind of passion for scenery and natural beauty has of late risen in the mind of this country. It is not only traceable, but powerful, and widely spread; so much so as to take rank with national ideas and feelings. It is true that great poets have shown the way, and led up to it. But general sentiment speedily follows the thought and poetry of an age: and the English feeling for natural beauty has long been popular, and perhaps national. Wordsworth's name will always retain the chief place among the poets of our Nature-Revival; but he was preceded by Thomson and Gray, by Collins, Burns, and Cowper: and roughly opposed, as he certainly was, he never seems to have felt unsupported or

alone. With Scott, and finally with Tennyson, the school of natural Beauty prevailed; and somewhat to its own deterioration it became the fashion. The great idea of God's appeal to the spirit of man through the experiences of natural Beauty had fallen during its early revival, almost exactly into the right hands. If not strictly what would be called a religious movement, it was put forth by men in whose minds it was allied with religion, or with the highest spiritual feelings they possessed: and it met with a great body of support from part of the religious world itself, who had happily in no case or sense forgotten the song of Milton. But at the present hour, the subject of surface-physics and external beauty has been restated; and the outward veil of delightful form and colour with which natural organization is clad, is freshly illustrated, and with a certain supremacy of power, by Prof. Ruskin. The fourth volume of Modern Painters, in particular, combines an argument like Paley's from Benevolent Design, with the corollary of Beauty as resulting from such design. It illustrates the connexion stated by Dr. Mozley, and that in a manner so graphic and complete, that we can do no better than devote the latter part of this book to a summary of it; which will not, it is hoped, be only a series of excerpta of fine things said about Nature, but the arrangement

of a body of testimony into something like a connected argument or case.

§ 4. *Utility and Beauty.*

These great modern works then, have, as we say, created or collected a school of thought, poetry, and art, devoted in a sufficiently healthy manner to the study of external nature. But no member of that school has ever supposed that the love of nature, or the thoughts of Divine greatness or glory which it awoke in his mind, are by any means new features in human thought or feeling. From the earliest ages men have meditated, with sense of Divine power and presence, on the world they have lived in; partly, it may be said, on its utilities, or adaptation for their daily life; partly on its beauties or sublimities, the daily food of their eyes and thoughts. Everything in nature appears to fulfil some purpose of utility; and we may assert with Ruskin that there is no object in nature which is not capable of conveying ideas of Beauty. 'There is scarcely anything in pure undiseased (external) nature like positive deformity: but only degrees of beauty, or such points of permitted contrast as may render all around these more valuable by their oppo-

sition[1].' This is quoted by Prof. J. S. Blackie[2], and is sufficiently confirmed by the experience of all advanced students in naturalist painting. Everything is worth representing well; the great pleasure felt in thorough imitative realization, even to illusion, bears witness to the truth that ordinary things possess Beauty when looked at with vigorous attention; as by the painter, or the skilled critic who follows his touches, and recognizes accurate likeness, with its charm and its great difficulties. Similarly, the wonderful ingenuities of internal structure exist in every creature we can examine, whether it strikes us as an important creature or not. But it is to be observed here, and in our future chapter on this part of the subject, that these wonders are very frequently, we may say generally, concealed from our sight. We are fearfully as well as wonderfully made: the fearfulness of our inner frame is hidden by a veil of comeliness: the tissues and ducts, the bones and muscles, of our life are unsightly things, and work for us unseen. This is the great distinction between the natural theology which rests on Nature's adaptation to animal life, and the natural theology of Beauty, which indicates that nature was in her origin made very good for our contemplation.

[1] 'Modern Painters,' Part I. sect. i. § 6.

[2] 'On Beauty,' Discourse I. p. 2.

§ 5. *Special Distinctions between External and Internal Structure.*

It is further to be noticed, that though Beauty and Utility in nature are so connected with each other, as to be evidently derived from the same source, they are in themselves quite separate things, appealing to different faculties of the soul, or to the same faculty for different reasons. Outer Beauty in form or colour makes its appeal through simple pleasure of the sight. Inner Utility or excellence of construction appeals to the intellect, through the eye it is true, but without special delight to the eye. As we know, a certain attention is required of us to appreciate either: but this is particularly the case with regard to the external charm of things. A person quite ignorant of the conformation and processes of his own interior organization may enjoy perfect health, be conscious of it and thankful for it. His physical frame will work for him without his studying it: too constant thought about one's own anatomy may do harm, as a man has been said to have worked at that science till he was afraid 'to lift his hand to his head.' But external Beauty, unless we give our attention to it, is simply nothing. We must apply our reflective faculty to it. Perhaps few persons would think St. Bernard insensible, though he rode all day beside Lake Leman,

and asked where it was in the evening. Nevertheless he paid no attention to its beauty at that time, and it was literally nothing to him. He may have been better employed; but the mountains and waters were there for him to see; and as he did not see them, they were only so much matter in his way, over and through which his mule toiled and splashed with trial to his patience and interruption of his reverie. Beauty could not exist for him without attention; i. e. his reflection on his own emotions awakened through sight. So it is with others who have probably less reason for abstraction. Atmospheric laws of nature cause all the beauty of sunset: that is to say, they throw it off by the way in their working, for seeing eyes to enjoy. They might have done what is needful for us without composing themselves into pictures; they often do. Some of us may have felt, in that grey weather during autumn or spring which seems to favour London and Oxford with special fulness of its presence, how the whole view and aspect of things sometimes changes for about half an hour of the last light, when the sun breaks forth before setting 'as glorying in his course well done,' and all the clouds which hid him all day now minister to his last glory with colours of nameless tint and indescribable brilliancy. To us it has seemed

like a proclamation that, come what will in a world of gloom, of storm and tempest, Beauty and visible glory still exist for man, and are a sign of Him who made them. We could live without the sunset: but its delight pleads with our spirit.

§ 6. *Sense of Beauty in other Creatures besides Man.*

We follow Dr. Mozley in arguing that only a Divine Reason (to which our own bears the relation of analogy at least) could thus evolve Beauty for our spirits from the natural chemistry and machinery of our lives. Nothing less, he says, can make such appeal to human Reason[1], and beauty is visible to reason alone. 'The glory of nature resides in the mind of man; there is an inward intervening light through which the material objects pass; a transforming medium which converts the physical sights into a picture.' This does not mean merely that objects would not be beautiful to man if man were not there to see and reflect upon them; nor does it deny the existence of other beings, similarly or more highly gifted, whom Beauty may also visit, and who may be nearer to her. The whole case seems to be, that the material organizations of life cause the

[1] Dr. Mozley seems to use this word for all the uses of the reflective faculty. He need not be considered at issue with Pascal's 'Le Cœur a des raisons que la Raison ne connait point.'

experience called Beauty in a creature fully prepared to receive it; and that man (as far as he is definitely informed) is the only creature in the world so prepared. Other creatures there are who are probably appealed to in the same way by more direct and open vision of the glory of God, by some manifestation in perfect beauty. And we do not deny that lower animals may feel preference for higher and more perfect specimens of their own order; only then it was certainly given them by a Creative Wisdom appealing to their senses. There is no doubt that a cock bird or cockchafer may prefer the appearance of one female of his species to that of another. But that is not definitely proved, and it only accounts for beauty in birds or insects of such and such a kind. Observations of this sort have only been made in a very fragmentary manner, and have neither been verified, fairly estimated, or connected with each other, except in the enthusiastic eagerness of theorists who want to hold out a prospect of some future account of Beauty on materialistic principles. It has never been proved that a bird is quite free from caprice, or faithful to a calculated standard of beauty, so as to work out a typical and improving bird in his function of propagation. Bees may prefer certain flowers; but they cer-

tainly are not guided by any notion like our own of Beauty, or they would not keep up their innumerable murmurs all day long in a lime-avenue or a bean-field. These are, as Sir E. Beckett says[1], only 'odd bits of hypothetical explanation;' and if they were connected and made universal, they would only prove that beauty was a rule of natural selection, and either—(1) that some conscious organizer willed it so, and made it a rule:—or (2) that the organization was the personal choice of every individual atom of which it consists. This last, if any one holds it, is certainly no Atheistic doctrine, but a high form of Pantheism; and to this every system which denies a Living God and Creator will infallibly come, while logic is logic.

There is no harm in noting instances in which animals may be supposed to prefer beautiful to ugly objects. They cannot be proved to reflect on the quality of Beauty; and until a dog or elephant can be shown to be affected by the colours of sunrise and sunset, by a starry night, by forests, seas, and mountains, and by the wonderful structure of his own body, the case for equalizing man with the beasts of the field is incomplete, whether we level upwards or downwards. What we say here is, that the sense of beauty modifies human life, as in an

[1] 'Origin of Laws of Creation,' p. 90.

animal it may, or may not, modify animal life: that that sense is a spiritual supplement to the sense of sight; apparently traceable to the same Author, and intended to guide our conjectures concerning Him.

§ 7. *The terms Objective and Subjective*[1].

These words have been often, and perhaps not unreasonably, protested against, as bewildering and unsuited to the plain language of common sense. Nevertheless, they have made their way, and seem to require some brief notice here. Objective at present means the real or constant state of things: subjective, the mind's notion of the state of things. They ought, therefore, to be coincident in all cases, but are not so: for the mind is often imperfectly informed. Confusion has hence arisen, and subjective truth has been opposed to objective, in a way which reduces it to no more than sincere conviction. Objective means that element in

[1] It is asserted in Dr. Fleming's 'Vocabulary of Philosophy,' *s. v.* Objective, p. 351, that the terms Objective and Subjective have changed meanings, as object, objective, used to be applied to things as objects of the understanding or the senses; and subject meant substance in the Middle Ages, as indeed in Descartes and Spinoza. The notion or conviction of the mind would in this nomenclature be objective, the actual state of things subjective. This seems to give some reason for resigning the use of the terms altogether; but they seem to lead to explanations which should not be omitted.

our view of things which comes from without, Subjective the element that comes from within. Our view of colour, for instance, contains the external impression—motion of the ether—and the internal power which translates it into hue. But this difference between the Objective, or Absolute Fact, and the Subjective, or the human standard of fact as far as known, necessarily affects Natural Beauty. For many men have many minds, and may sincerely disagree about Beautiful Things: though probably a much nearer consensus might be obtained about Beauty absolute or abstract, from persons qualified to argue on the subject. And men's notions about things Beautiful have been so many, so various, and so contradictory as to lead to a kind of scepticism about beauty, and give occasion to what is called the Theory of Association. Various Scottish philosophers long held that Beauty was arbitrary and accidental: 'a merely mental or subjective thing, born of association, and depending on individual caprice[1].' This was not connected, in the minds of its authors, with any wish or intention to deny God as Author of Nature or its beauty: it was only a way of putting the subject of Beauty aside; partly as incapable of proper philosophical analysis; and partly as not worth the trouble, from

[1] Principal Shairp's 'Poetic Interpretation of Nature,' p. 7.

its accidental and irregular character. And Professor Blackie remarks, that as the Scotch are not, or then were not, a very æsthetic people; not students of external Beauty, to whom its nature made great difference, this theory prevailed among them in the earlier years of this century: and though it is now pretty well dispersed, no other seems to have taken its place. It is not, in fact, a theory, but a refusal to attempt one. In our sense then there would be an Objective Beauty, as God made it, a sign or handmark of His working, recognizable in Nature. It would be visible to properly prepared and healthy human creatures, fairly developed in intellect and innocent in morals. They would be able to agree on pure or standard Beauty. They would form right choice, and see the real thing. But among them and often against them would be the passionate or perverted vision of Beauty, which sees the wrong form of it, and is desperately convinced that it sees rightly; in which Medea and Messalina are standards of beauty; and of which we hear a great deal too much at the present day. All we can answer is, You admire Medea as we admire her, and no otherwise: because she is a cunning pattern of excelling Nature; because she has such and such stature, eyes, hair, and poetry of movement — not because her

eyes express furious passion. Nobody admires evil for evil's sake; or mixed characters for the evil that is in them; or their mixed expressions for the evil part of them. We should like Medea better without murder, and Messalina with modesty. So would you, unless there is in you a lurking enjoyment of the contraries in each case. It is not the fallen or unnatural disturbance of these ladies' originally natural condition of right mind, which is beautiful: it is so much of the mother's or maiden's nature as yet is left in the still beautiful form. That retains its outer stamp of Divine workmanship for a time, and you do well to acknowledge it. You do neither well nor wisely in talking of passionate charms and demoniac beauty, as if passion or demons had anything to do with the subject.

We think, then, that if the words Objective and Subjective are applicable to Beauty at all, which we doubt, Objective Beauty will mean the power with which natural objects are endowed by their Creator, of causing certain experiences of reflective pleasure in man, possibly in other intelligences. Subjective Beauty will include men's ideas of Beauty, and renderings of beautiful objects; with the whole field of Art, which must derive its subjects from Nature in the last resource, since really unnatural things are always ugly. Still, the comparison of the

appearance which Nature intended some beautiful person to wear, with the expression to which evil may have brought him or her, is so intensely interesting as to be said to involve what is called in careless language an evil beauty. To say that Beauty depends on association is to make it entirely subjective, or what you please; to reduce it to nothing at all. And some such view of it will always exist while so many persons have a careless contempt for the subject, or think it vanity, or suspect its moral tendencies; for which last feeling immoral persons in all ages have given sad occasion, and particularly in our own days.

We may be well contented to sum up the question of the 'objectivity' of Beauty with the recent illustration of Principal Shairp, Professor of Poetry at Oxford. 'Light,' he says, 'is not self-existent, apart from any sentient being. The external reality is not light. The motion of certain particles, conveyed by the visual nerve to the brain, is felt as light. It is not a purely objective thing, but something produced by the encounter of certain motions with a perceiving mind. So vibrations of the air striking the drum of the ear, and conveyed to the brain, result in the perception of sound. In a similar way Beauty results from the meeting of certain qualities of the outward world

with a sensitive and imaginative soul. It is no merely mental or subjective thing. . . When the two elements necessary to the perception of it have met, it is a reality as inevitable and as veritable as the law of gravitation, or any law which Science registers.'

§ 8. *Some General Objections considered.*

But a religious argument from Beauty of External Nature, though, as we shall be able to show, it existed and was used from the earliest ages of human thought, has been unpopular, and is still exposed to suspicion in the eyes of many sincerely religious people. They may not wish to argue on evidences of faith at all. Their convictions on such matters may rest on dogmatic principles which content them as they are; or on personal experiences and past trials which have left them disinclined to revert again to subjects which have agitated and encumbered their minds in time past. More than this, a suspicion certainly exists that the whole subject may be ill-fitted for Christian contemplation in an ordinary way, and that Natural Beauty is no fit servant or aid to religious feeling or to spiritual truth. Some excellent minds and tempers have an ascetic objection to unnecessary pleasure, and the disturbing emotions of delight, in things which perish. Others, somewhat informed in

the history of the arts of poetry and painting, by which chiefly Natural Beauty is expressed and placed on record, suspect them as likely to do more harm than good. This general suspicion appears to be, if not a new feeling, still comparatively recent; and it seems to date, as far as we are concerned with it, from the early Cinque-Cento and the Reformation[1].

Up to that period, Beauty, or the Arts by which Beauty is produced by mankind, had been considered as allied with religion, or with all forms of the service or worship of God. The Hebrew[2] dispensation had made special use of decorative beauty, though strict Divine prohibitions against idolatry or imitative form always made the Eastern or Semitic side of the Church lean chiefly on splendour or glory of material and workmanship, rather than on human creativeness or imagination. Splendour alone was felt in the East as symbolic of God's glory, and little more seemed necessary. But with the Greek element in the Early Christian Church began the Intellectual or Didactic use of Imagery.

[1] It will be remembered that Cinque-Cento, literally five hundred, is used as a contraction for 'fifteen hundred'—the century in which the Vitruvian revival of architecture took place in Italy. To us the fifteenth century means all the years from 1400–1499. To an Italian it means all the years which are written with 15—from 1500 to 1599.

[2] See Exod. xxviii. 2, xxxv. 30; 1 Chron. xvi. 29; Ps. xxix. 2.

It was long permitted, and admirably used for instructive purpose. But, like other things, it was subject to corruption: and it is impossible to acquit the Italian race, or the Roman Church at the head of it, from various misuses, both of splendour and inventive art, in the cause of a corrupt faith and degraded practice of life. Thus in the Northern, Teutonic and Protestant, mind the idea of Beauty became associated with religious corruption and persecution, and with extreme wickedness, sensuality, and cruelty. This association has been inherited by us, and is by no means extinct. It is sufficient to say here, in reply to these objections, that by long experience and patience, by thought, study, and culture, a right understanding seems to be at last attainable, as to the right use of splendour and imagery in Divine Service and religious instruction. Further, it is felt that the existence of Beauty, or of man's primarily harmless delight in it, can no longer be ignored: that observed beauty in all natural objects suggests the presence and creative power of God, and that Beauty may be made use of in the concrete accordingly; and also reasoned from in the abstract to valid purpose. To collate and set in order some important testimonies in this direction, which have been delivered within the last half-century, but not as yet thoroughly

compared with each other, is the purpose of this little book. The evidence of Mechanical Design has been fully set forth by Paley: its relations with the cognate argument from Beauty have been pointed out by Dr. Mozley. But the evidence from the aspect and structure of Inanimate Nature, in other words from Landscape-beauty, has been collected and in a great measure set in order by Prof. Ruskin in what appears to us to be an unexampled manner, specially adapted to the spiritual thoughts and wants of the present generation. It seems possible to array all this in the form of an Argument or organized Body of Evidence. Its course seems to be, first, a sketch of the earlier argument of Theology from the aspects of Nature, as evidenced by the Bible for the Semitic races of men, the chief retainers of Monotheism: by other records for the Aryans. Then we must follow its traces through Greek, Roman, early Christian, and Renaissance record. After the Scientific Renaissance of the seventeenth century the Argument from Beauty comes in contact with that from Design; and there is a singular harmony in that contact, as expressed in the works of Paley on one side, and of later illustrators of Natural Beauty on the other. This is summed up in the works of Prof. Ruskin, and these will form our final chapters of reference.

CHAPTER II.

Early Semitic and Aryan Argument from External Nature.

§ 1. *Beauty and Design.*

Dr. Mozley makes the important remark[1] that the beauty of nature is necessary to man, in order to the perfection of praise. 'It may seem extraordinary, but it is the case, that though we certainly look at contrivance or machinery in nature with a high admiration, and with gratitude: still there is nothing in it which raises the mind's interest in nearly the same degree that beauty does. The old Design language got too much in the direction as if we knew all about God.' Perhaps such expressions as the Great Workman or Architect, the Master Builder, and so on, had an unconscious anthropomorphism in them, and men forgot in their use that His Name is secret, and that His thoughts are not as our thoughts. But 'Beauty,' says Dr. Mozley, 'stands upon the threshold of the mystical world, and excites a curiosity about

[1] 'University Sermons, On Nature,' p. 145.

God .... it throws us upon the thought of what there is behind the veil.'

The fact is, as has partly been said, that though the connexion between beauty and contrivance is so close, their two trains of thought are entirely separate. Contrivance is understood through analysis. Beauty presents itself, an undeniable fact, but beyond the power of analysis. And it is therefore most important for us to give some attention to the early thoughts of uncultured men, the unknown ancestors of our modern races, about the natural beauty or sublimity they could not analyze or yet help observing; and to take note of how much or how little it had to do with their religion, and even with their worship. We do not say that this has been neglected, it is only our object to show with what ability and conclusiveness this connexion has lately been asserted. And we also observe a tendency to deny it, at least by implication, or at least to ignore the very important testimony which it involves. Science proceeds by analysis, with what wonderful results we need not be told. Like every successful movement, it has its army of followers who intend to live by it, which is extremely proper; and they have a right to magnify their office, to which here and throughout this work we render due homage. But they have no right to say that Beauty, Awe, Admira-

tion, and Adoration, with their great visible results in the world, are absolutely molecular or material; nor if they do say so, can they expect the artistic world (we say nothing here of the religious) to take what they say for gospel. It may be news, no doubt, but it is not good news. Scientific men have hardly time to deal with history, or the history of thought, as it deserves. They want a brief summary or theory of it which shall as far as possible include it in their own province: some hypothesis which shall make beauty a gas or an æther; as the late Mr. Buckle was said to have called religion 'an uterine affection,' and Cabanis is supposed to have connected sentiment with the small intestines. Consequently scientific men have little sympathy with the sentimental or spiritual view of Natural Beauty, and find it convenient to ignore the whole school of poets, painters, and psychologists who have dealt with it. It is treated as a modern feeling, a sentimental craze standing on nothing, or vitiated by its connexion with Religion. It is said to have come in with Rousseau, and is expected to go out as soon as the works of Ruskin cease to be read—which appears to us to amount to a tolerably long lease, quite sufficient for the purposes of this book.

§ 2. *Semitic or Aryan View of Beauty.*

It seems best then to assert our conviction that the modern Arguments from Design or Beauty to a Creator are by no means new things: only fresh developments of a primæval habit of feeling after God by meditation on His works. Without a revelation of Him, or some distinct tradition of one, this habit may lead to a Pantheism from which it can hardly be disentangled; but which in some cases, among both Greeks and Romans, seems to have risen to a practical Monotheism. But we have to deal with the Semitic races first, and must let them be represented by Hebrew records. These enable us to understand something of what was thought of Natural Beauty by an Arab nation specially instructed in the nature and the worship of One God, having further hopes from Him, and distinguished from other nations by their knowledge of Him. Other divisions of the same great race appear to have held various forms of Nature-worship; originally founded on human ideas of a creative, or productive and reproductive principle, as existing and even taking personal form in the phænomena or powers of Nature. They all made use of symbolism, first to represent these powers more vividly to their thoughts, then to display idols,

eidola, or representations of such beings, to the physical eyesight. We do not see that they had any ideal of, or paid much attention to, Beauty in the Hellenic or modern sense; or that they thought of what we call the beauty of nature. An Egyptian ideal or type seems to have existed, and may have expressed to contemporary eyes the beauty or sublimity which has been seen in it, or read into its expression by many and competent moderns. But we cannot here go into Egyptian art, or its probable connexion with Greek: or with the relations of Greek art to Assyrian, and particularly to Phœnician, work. It is enough to say that in Semitic idols or images what we call beauty seems to have had no share and received no attention. They were either symbolic compositions, as the Ninevite forms of bull, lion, and eagle, or traditional talismans or fetiches; or such compounds of both as the Philistine Dagon or the Attic Glaucus. The Semitic mind dwelt on ideas of Power, not of Beauty.

The Greeks, in whom East and West met, reformed Nature-worship in some degree by their vast intellectual power and speculative ingenuity; and remodelled symbolic idolatry altogether by their grand artistic personifications. They will accordingly have a chapter to themselves; as not only representative Aryans,

but nearly related in their views of Nature to the world of modern thought and art, and to ourselves who dwell in it. They are our masters of the great principle of Representative Art, which really means observing Nature, and recording her beauty through the mysterious vision of the human intellect. We cannot see that there was any reflective or purely intellectual study of Nature before them. Of awe, of repose, of grandeur in scale and general sense of sublimity, we find enough in Egypt and Assyria. These emotions were known and made use of, but they were not subject of meditation that we know of. In Hebrew records we hear of matchless splendour and cunning workmanship. In all we see either defined forms of Nature-worship, or, as with Hebrews, continual and dangerous tendency towards it. It has been by the sense of dedicated riches, by splendour or mass of material, by symbolism or dedication of power, that the Eastern mind has always represented Deity to itself. How far it has sought or seen His Image in nature we shall try to determine.

§ 3. *The Book of Job.*

Towards the end of the earliest, or one of the earliest, books of the Old Testament Canon we have a direct call to reflection on Natural

Beauty, made by the Creator Himself for Himself, that Job may see His glory in His works, and be convinced and restored. He answers out of the whirlwind, from the terrible-sublime of the great forces of Nature. He works no special wonder, except in that personal manifestation; He bids Job think of what he has seen and known. The Patriarch has led the life of shepherd, hunter, and soldier: he has ranged far with his tribe and its allies; probably as a great sheikh of the Anazeh Arabs would at this day; from Euphrates and Tigris to Damascus or its site on Eastern Anti-Lebanon, facing the Desert—from thence perhaps to Edom and to Central Arabia and the children of Joktan. He may have known Egypt and Ethiopia. He may have seen Behemoth and Leviathan in Euphrates; or he knows their might and their terrors. He knows sunset and sunrise, winter and summer; he has seen the snow fall, or at least crest Lebanon or the Lower Taurus, and watched the swellings of torrents and rivers; he is an Arab and has ridden in chase and battle, and felt beneath him 'the bounding wave of delight,' which is the strength of the horse, when he mocks at fear, and is not affrighted; when his courage goes through the soul of his rider. It is as if the glory and greatness of Nature, and earthly Life in its strength, joy, and ecstatic

intensity, had all been presented to Job in order by Him who made all. It is as if, in proving His ways Infinite to him, God proved all, with easy humiliation and blessed comfort to His servant sorely afflicted with evil. The briefest possible sketch of the book may be allowed us here.

The power of evil has been let loose by its representative on God's servant Job, who has 'feared God and eschewed evil.' He has endured all—every affliction, of loss, and bereavement, the utmost disgraces and torment of bodily disease, which can leave life enough for thought, for more suffering, and for mental struggle. In all outer trial (which has utterly overthrown the faith of his wife) Job has been found blameless; in all this he has 'not sinned with his lips[1].' He has cut through all the knots which bind the world of modern thought; he faces the question of Evil and its origin with far more composure than Rousseau, Byron, or Shelley. 'What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' It is not Islâm, but devout and personal confidence. But his friends and their kind intentions have come upon him; their genuine sorrow is no comfort to his, for they are full of suspicion of secret crime against him, and he feels he cannot get them to see him fairly.

[1] i. 22, ii. 10.

They heap half-truths, or truths misapplied upon him: they cannot wait to see if there be any more distant purpose of God concerning him. They see as limited an arc of the cycle of Divine Purpose as their suffering friend. They have sat before him long in great sorrow and true pity, but it is mixed with suspicion, and they are full of platitude to vex him further. Their silence has lasted long. Seeing all his own mischance, at length Job will speak; and thereon he opens his mouth with the words, 'Let the day perish wherein I was born[1].'

Of the first discussion which follows, we have only to remark that all parties in it seem, in different degrees, to lose sight of God's Presence and Purpose in Nature. The trial is great, Job is pressed on to anticipate his Redeemer, and justice in mercy: but he is led also to assert his own innocence against his Creator. And Elihu begins, accordingly, with God as Creative Lord of all. He asserts the greatness, the Almighti-

[1] The works of William Blake are now widely known, or known of. The 'Illustrations to the Book of Job' may certainly be called a work of inspiration in the wider and humbler sense of the term. They are, at all events, the highest tribute of an extraordinary mind to Holy Scripture; and all who have seen them will remember the etching entitled 'Let the day perish wherein I was born,' and the strong image of the Patriarch throwing up his marred and nervous arms in appeal to heaven and earth, and Him who hears.

ness, the justice and universal providence or supervision of God[1]. He points out that all is of God's grace, and that prayer may be unanswered if it is offered in pride or self-assertion. Job is silent before the young man, and he proceeds to speak of the wonders of God's creation, the snow, and lightning of the thunder, the thick cloud and great rain of His strength. It would seem that the signs of the coming Theophany were present even as he spoke, and that he appealed to the visible storm of God's manifestation already casting its shadow over the desert and the wearied disputants[2].

Then, at length, the controversy having been carried as far as man can bear it, the Lord answers Job out of the whirlwind. He does not argue with His servant: He makes him to know a little more of Him by His works, and it is enough. His servant has endured and complained: under direct trial he has not failed; but searching provocation of men has led him to challenge the justice of his Lord. He is not argued with, he is bidden to look and see, to consider all this glory of creation (which refers him to natural sublimity and beauty), and the providential ordering and care shown in the life provided for all creatures (which is the highest form of argument from design). The greatness

[1] xxxiv. 21. [2] See Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, *s.v.* Job.

of Job's affliction must not shut him up in darkness altogether; he must still see God where He is to be seen. In the contemplation of such wonders, in all that is round him, he may learn to feel the mightiness of the hands he is in, and may find faith and rest. And it is enough: Job makes full confession of God; his eye sees Him and he abhors himself, not for unreal and supposed sin, but for arrogance and self-justification. He repents in dust and ashes, and his latter end is blessed more than his beginning.

It is by this appeal to awe rising towards terror, and to beauty amounting to delight, that the soul of man has been mercifully raised above earth's great troubles from the first days to our own. It seems to us that this, perhaps the most ancient of humanly recorded writings, is perfectly modern and a book of the day, when it is considered as an exponent of real and deep emotional efforts, between mental speculation and actual trial of the soul. Its poetry is no mere rhetoric; rhetoric is not spoken out of the whirlwind at any time. Let Job forget himself awhile, and look forth, and see God's works. This really seems to us perfectly rational and practical at the present day. Wise men of the nineteenth century may from time to time be brought to their wits' end in distress: and then a certain vein of consolation, rising always towards wonder

and adoration, is to be found in the glory of the visible Creation, now as of old; and that may technically be named an Argument from the appearances of External Nature, or from surface Physics, or the Natural Theology of Natural Beauty, as it has been called at the head of this book, for Paley's sake. Also we seem to see, or we conjecture in all charity, that the mental condition of many leaders of the negative side of religious thought is very much like what Job's would have been if he had not repented at God's appeal for His own honour. The sentimental side of denial takes that position, if not the scientific. The latter are really on a new line, for they labour to separate God from His works altogether, which is not attempted by any character in the Book of Job, earthly or spiritual. But the principle of all modern unbelief is indefinite self-assertion against God. Man is the measure of all things; therefore if any person cannot measure God, He is nothing to that person. Such is really the argument of scientific agnosticism. Self-worship has effectively taken the place of wood and stone. Man is himself; he will assert his innocency or his rights against God; and he it is who ought to speak for himself. Who is Lord over him? He is not to behold nature and adore; he is to analyse structure, to govern matter, to order the world his

own way. When it will not go his way, he can go on with various forms of outcry against God until he, or his body, returns to his dust.

§ 4. *Later Hebrew Thought.*

As for later or Hebrew argument from Beauty, we have traces enough, in the Psalms and the Prophets, of how men whose central belief was in the God of Israel reasoned towards Him, from their sense of the sublime, or from natural delight in form, colour, grandeur, and life in all its intensities. Hebrews as well as Hellenes felt the human love of nature and sweet earth, and observed and sympathized with the life of silent or inanimate things, as God's work and a sign from Him of His glory. Aryan or Semitic men, without revelation, first considered natural phænomena as Divine in themselves. That is the stage of harmless Pantheism of the untutored Indian, who sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind, unable to distinguish Him from the elements. Then they began to understand the laws by which phænomena are governed, and to see that the latter are not visible Deity, but a veil and vesture partly symbolic of Him, by which great and true ideas of His greatness may be attained. It might be maintained that the undefined conjectures of untutored persons of healthy life, fine

senses, and poetic power of intellect, when they are led to conjecture after God from the data of their own wholesome lives, are not very distant in result from the ultimate conclusions of highly educated Theists, or indeed from those of the Christian faith of our own day. Hebrews enjoyed Nature as the Greeks did, and as we do, in the form of fields, streams, growth, herds, forests, and gardens. All this is expressed in fulness in the Song of Solomon, though the higher notes of natural sublimity break out more clearly in the Psalms. It will be remembered that Hebrews were in fact mountaineers, and lived as mountaineers seem always to do, between innate attachment to the rugged power of their own gorges and high pastures, and full appreciation of the comparative richness of the plain. Prof. Ruskin has said[1], with great appearance of truth, that 'grape and wheat lands, namely, rocks and hills, good for the vine and associated with arable ground, are the noblest and best ground given to man. In these districts only art of the highest kind seems possible, the religious art of the desert or sand-lands being here joined with that of pleasure or sense.' During the kingdom of Israel, probably up to the captivity of Samaria, and, excepting under special circumstances of drought, both the hill

[1] 'Modern Painters,' vol. v. p. 138.

country and the plains of Judæa may have come under this description, though their present desolation excludes them from it for a time. A land of broken hills, on the whole well watered, terraced and highly cultivated, not, as now, wooded only with the grey and arid olive, but with the fig-tree, terebinth, cypress, and sycamore in all parts, and the palm and cedar not unfrequently, would afford those delightful contrasts of wildness and richness which under Eastern light and shade may be considered, at least, highly fruitful in ideas of beauty. They appeal to Nature as God's work untouched by men, and they suggest His blessing as present on man's labour. Life was beautiful to the Hebrew of David's days, as to the Athenian contemporaries of Pheidias. No man has understood this better than Mr. Browning, whose many-sided mind has reflected so many types and periods of humanity, and we may be excused in quoting a few lines of his from the wonderful study called 'Saul.' David sings of life to his master in the dark hour—to Saul agonized and haunted by the evil spirit:—

> 'And I sang, Oh, our manhood's prime vigour!
> No spirit feels waste,
> No muscle is stopped in its playing,
> No sinew unbraced;
> And the wild joy of living—the leaping
> From rock up to rock,

The rending of boughs from the palm-tree,
The cool silver shock
Of a plunge in the pool's living water;
The haunt of the bear,
And the sultriness, showing the lion
Is couched in his lair—
The meal—the rich dates, yellowed o'er
With gold-dust divine;
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher,
The full draught of wine;
And the sleep in the dry river-channel,
Where tall rushes tell
How the water was wont to go warbling
So softly and well—
How good is man's life here, mere living!'

This amounts to Hellenic enjoyment of Nature; in her fulness, and without the sensual taint of which modern criticism takes rather too sedulous account. Properly speaking, neither Greek nor Hebrew had the modern artistic or sentimental view of the mountains, as places apart from men, solitudes preferable to society. Neither, perhaps, had any sentiment about anything. The latter certainly had a religious awe connected with the mountains and strong foundations of the earth, that are bidden to hear the Lord's controversy. The colour, life, and pleasantness of creation made beauty in his eyes, and he enjoyed it with all his heart[1]. But

[1] The Song of Solomon may be compared with the latter part of the Book of Job on this matter, as contrasting absolute sublimity of thought, raised and refined by suffering, with the fullest enjoyment of permitted happiness: but this is far beyond

representation was forbidden him. We must look to Greek monuments and records for analysis of form, for the spirit of delineation, for enjoyment of line, light, and shade, and for great realizations of beautiful life. But when our Lord bade His brethren after the flesh consider the ravens and the lilies, and man as far better than they, He bade them do as David and Solomon had done in their day. He appealed to the natural and human instinct of meditation and rejoicing in the work of God's hands, which we also inherit from all the ages of mankind.

It is of importance to have the testimony on this matter of a leading name in modern natural science. It carries with it no prepossession on the religious or spiritual side, as we understand the words religious and spiritual; though we know not exactly what sense the author would attach to them. The following passage from Prof. Tyndall's 'Fragments of Science' has been pointed out to me through the kindness of the Rev. E. M^cClure; and it certainly bears on the question of Universal Human Feeling for Natural Beauty as supernatural, divine, or at least august and inexplicable:—

our compass. Our Lord's mention of Solomon (Matt. v) may have a suppressed reference to his study in natural things, as of the cedar and the hyssop, as well as to the human glory and splendour, which natural things excel.

'The circle of human nature is not complete without the arc of feeling and emotion. The lilies of the field have a value for us above their botanical one. A certain lightening of the heart accompanies the declaration that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. The sound of the village bell, which comes mellowed from the valley to the traveller upon the hill, has a value beyond its acoustical one. The setting sun, when it mantles with the bloom of roses the Alpine snows, has a value beyond its optical one. The starry heavens, as you know, had for Immanuel Kant a value beyond their astronomical one. Round about the sphere of intellect sweeps the horizon of the emotions, from which our noblest impulses are derived.'

The thought involved in this passage, especially in its last two lines, is certainly an important concession to spiritual belief, or belief in the human spirit, as capable of lofty ideas not based on material knowledge. To call these emotional is to class them with half-bodily feelings from which they are distinct; but this is perhaps necessary to the anti-religious side of Dr. Tyndall's position. Of course to admit that our noblest impulses, mental or spiritual, are derived from (or arise somewhere within) the horizon of the emotions, and beyond the sphere of intellect, is to admit that man's

imagination is higher than his intellect, with which we fully coincide. And if, as really is the case, Dr. Tyndall points out the greatness and nobleness of the emotions produced by Natural Beauty as some of the highest of which man is capable, he grants, in most impressive language, all this book could ask him to grant for its sake; though its author might entreat him to admit still more for his own.

It seems, then, that the Theist's view of the lilies of the field and the sunset, with the associations which his thoughts of God bring to bear on such objects, raises in his mind emotions with which the atheist has nothing to do, or against which he must contend. Great and universal displays of Beauty in the world are evidently good: and they put those who deny the Parent of Good under the same difficulty which Theists experience in accounting for Evil. If we rejected the Author of Good, we should be as much troubled to account for Good and Beauty as we are, in our present position, by the problem of Evil. It is clear that, from the beginnings of Hebrew thought or literature, men were directed to look, in their long struggle with nature, at those outer signs of beauty which indicate the presence of a Creator, and point to the hope that He will abolish evil at last, and make all things new.

§ 5. *Aryan Views of Nature.*

There is another line of enquiry, which cannot be properly followed out here; but it cannot, either, be passed by without notice. Whatever view we take, or however little knowledge we possess, of a primæval Aryan religion, we are quite sure that it existed, with or without primitive tradition; and that it was much influenced by the exterior wonder and beauty of nature. It is fortunate that we possess a book on this subject, which is popularly written and easy to understand; and which also goes into full explanation, and gives accurate references. In this respect it seems that Prof. M. Müller's 'Chips from a German Workshop' will long be the model for many conscientious lecturers and essayists, whose effort must be always to give the results of their knowledge and their references to its sources, in a readable and accessible form. Of this work it has only to be said here, that it shows that the argument from Natural Beauty or Glory underlies the whole progress of Natural Religion. The Vedas are all brightness, light, the coming and going of the sun, which is God's chief symbol of Himself to heathen man[1]. The single word Deva, or Brightness, is the root of Θεός, Deus, and

[1] See vol. i. ed. 1, pp. 25–29, etc.

Deity; and it, with its countless branch etymologies, would alone suffice for our purpose. Dyaus is Zeus, the glorious one.

The fact is that the earliest and most constantly renewed phænomena of Natural Beauty are sunset and sunrise. The evening and the morning are the day, and they give warning of their Maker. A rude age may pass over other phænomena for a time without reflection; but on these things men must begin to think. They really and practically do utter a voice. We have heard the nineteenth Psalm quoted conventionally, but we never heard anybody say it was not true. 'The sun cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, he rejoiceth as a giant to run his course.' Imagine those words in the mouth of a child of the desert, or an eastern shepherd or Aryan herdsman accustomed to the heat and burden of noonday, to saffron morns and purple eves, and all the recurring pomps of night and day. To him at such times[1] 'the doors of light seem opened, and all the multitude of the herds of heaven goes forth to range its fields once more.' This sight is, at all events, closely related to the beginnings of Natural Religion, since it suggests Deity to man, and sustains him in believing any traditional revelation he may possess.

[1] 'Chips from a German Workshop,' vol. ii. p. 98.

It elevates the mind, through admiration, to adoration of the Unseen through things seen; it seems to give signs and symbols of a God already heard of with the ear. To minds not dereligionized by modern process it seems simply true that 'there is no sight in nature[1] more elevating than the dawn, even to us, whom philosophy would wish to teach that *nil admirari* is the highest wisdom. Yet in earlier times the power of admiring was the greatest blessing bestowed on mankind.' Of course it is: it is a natural revelation to those who have no other: it is the witness of Nature to those who have.

Prof. Max Müller is always happy in his quotations, but particularly so in Wordsworth's 'Ode to the Sun,' with its curiously ancient and Vedic thought and phraseology; and it may enable us to distinguish the older and harmless Pantheism of seeking and seeing God in all His works, with patriarchs and prophets, from the lower Pantheism which sees no God except in things. We may quote one more testimony for our own times and our own city-life from the late A. H. Clough; of whom it may at least be said that he sought God always according to his lights; and whose poetry is related to Wordsworth's, like that of the whole

[1] 'Chips from a German Workshop,' vol. i. p. 94.

descriptive school of the last fifty years. The sense of daily renewal, of returning Beauty again elevating or comforting like a Divine messenger, is faithfully and nobly expressed, and the passage seems to us an instance of that close connexion between natural religion, poetry, and art, which is the real dynamic of the two latter[1].

But it is time to proceed to the Hellenic ages, and to take note of the extraordinary development of ideas of Beauty in their course, and also to their pursuit of the Divine argument, or search after God by the way of beauty; first, in the creative age of Pericles, Pheidias, and the tragedians; secondly, in the philosophic seekings of Plato and Aristotle, particularly of the former.

[1] See Poems, ed. 3, p. 310, 'Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich:'—

'But as the light of day enters some populous city,
Shaming away, ere it come, by the chilly daystreak signal,
High and low, the misusers of night; shaming out the gas-lamps,
All the great empty streets are flooded with broadening clearness.

* * * * * * *

He that goes forth to his walks, while speeding to the suburbs,
Sees sights only peaceful and pure.

* * * * * * *

So that the whole great wicked artificial civilized fabric,
All its unfinished houses, lots for sale, and railway outworks,
Seem reaccepted, resumed to primal Nature and Beauty.'

It is curious to compare such a passage with Mr. Swinburne's singular light-worship, in 'Off Shore,' p. 80.

CHAPTER III.

Greek Views of Beauty.

§ 1. *Relations of Greek and Modern Art.*

There is this special reason for our careful consideration of the relations of Beauty to spiritual thought in the greatest ages of the Greek intellect, that Greek thoughts on intellectual subjects are virtually modern as well as ancient. In poetry, in many parts of mental philosophy, at all events, and pre-eminently in Art, Greek productions are unexcelled, and Greek work is the standard of our own studios. An observation was made by a well-informed critic on the works of Mr. Watts, in 'The Times' of Jan. 6, 1882, that that painter made habitual use of a certain cast from the works of Pheidias (we presume from the Elgin marbles) as a standard of comparison for his own painting of the human form. That represents Humanity in its ideal, that is to say, in its highest form of actuality; as it looks when it is at its best. A more archaic school, and later Roman schools, exaggerated

muscle to display anatomical knowledge and technic power. The succeeding generation of Athens, represented by Praxiteles, softened form for the sake of a tenderer beauty. All had their success and their reward; but to this day, and to the first painters of the highest aim in Europe, the Pheidian work is the standard of excellence. If human form realized on canvas can stand up to or bear comparison with that, as in the same region of creative expression, then it is simply good, and nothing at present can be much better. That is to say, the hand and mind of Pheidias direct the best men of our modern schools, and through them exercise no small power over the modern mind, and are living things to this day. So it will be with the sister arts while they are pursued or worth pursuing in the modern world. We shall see in our last chapter how great a misfortune the general indifference to and ignorance of Greek art has been, in that it has permitted immoral or satanic poets and artists to claim alliance with Athenian beauty, when Athens would have been ashamed of them; and to compare themselves with the Periclean Age, when they are only fit for that of Tiberius. It remains for us to show how close was the relation (in some departments amounting to identity) between Greek Art and Greek Religion. First, as to

mythology, ritual, symbolic ceremonial, and whatsoever genuine creed as to spiritual things they represented before the philosophic Age. Then, secondly, as to the search after God, or some knowledge of the Divine, through Beauty in its various manifestations, moral, mental, and physical. These two enquiries are both in fact the Natural Theology of Natural Beauty, as pursued by a race of men to whom God had not specially revealed Himself; but whom, as His offspring, He moved to seek Him, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him.

§ 2. *Eastern Elements of Greek Art.*

It is remarked by Prof. Mahaffy, in his excellent 'Rambles and Studies in Greece,' how the Hellenic land lies open to the East, and by its very formation, as well as the distribution of its races, welcomes the approach, so to speak, of Oriental commerce, civilization, and instruction. 'Even now the face of Athens is turned, as of old, to the East. Her trade and her communications are through the Levant. Her intercourse is with Constantinople, and Smyrna, and Syria, and Alexandria, to which a man may sail almost any day in the week. You can only sail to Italy—I had almost said to Europe —on Saturdays and an occasional Thursday.'

It is no doubt the case; and the indebtedness of Greece, through Ionia and the isles, to Egypt, Assyria, and Phœnicia, will long employ the minds of scholars and antiquaries, and often with most valuable result. But for the immediate purposes of this book, it seems best to refer the reader chiefly to Mr. Murray's 'History of Greek Sculpture,' to Mr. Scharf's 'Essay on Ancient Arts' at the beginning of Wordsworth's 'Greece,' and occasionally to the publications of the Hellenic Society. He will find in the first two, and in Fergusson's 'Architecture,' nearly all he can want as to archaic Greek Art; as to its derivation from Eastern sources; and as to its universal and almost exclusive employment in the service of Religion. The Eastern ideas of splendour and sacrifice, of material value and precious offering, long prevailed over inventive beauty, and the sacrifice of artistic thought and the service of the cunning workman. These had indeed been recognized and copiously used in the Hebrew Tabernacle and Temple. A Divine charge had been given to Bezaleel and Aholiab under Moses, and they in their place had received a portion of the Spirit of God. There can be no doubt that their work formed the standard and tradition of Solomon's artists on Mount Moriah. But both alike relied greatly on richness and cost of material, and on the

beauty attainable by its natural colours; on the gleam of gold, the dark richness of bronze, and the intense colour of precious stones. A time was to come when men should have thoughts and ideas with a preciousness beyond rubies; and still know no better object or purpose for them than dedication to the God whom they sought after. Their thought and intellectual power were to lead them astray, it is true, or rather to wander with them from their true mark and reasonable service, led by the lusts of fallen nature, or driven by the furies of mutual hatred. They were to feel that they were made in the Image of God, yet fatally and for ever to make gods in their own image.

§ 3. *Greek Idolatry.*

It seems by no means correct to say, and it is by no means intended here to imply, that the Greeks were grosser in their worship of false gods than other races; or worshipped a more numerous host of heaven, or with baser rites: the contrary of all this is probably the case. What is meant here is that their extraordinary mimetic, or graphic, or imitative power and instinct led them, not only to use symbols, but attempt representative likeness, of all things they had to deal with, and especially of all

objects of worship. They not only made *eidola*, likenesses of their athletes whom they saw, but of their gods whom they did not see. They were not content with symbolism of Deity, like Assyrian or Egyptian personifications of strength and intellect, hawk-headed and lion-formed. They conceived of an actual personal *likeness* of Zeus or Athene. Their God must have a Presence or Form: one, doubtless, among many, but like their own; that is to say, their ideal of their own. It was childish or childlike misapplication of the method of conjecturing of God from the beauty of His works: but, as Prof. Ruskin says[1], the Greek intellect was in a childish phase as to reflection and deduction, though more than full-grown in invention and acuteness. It may have been connected with their exhilarating climate[2], their delicate senses, the personal vigour and bloom of health which refined them, the beauty of colour and form which surrounded them in their landscape, the mingled richness and picturesqueness of their country, which, far better than Syria, fulfils the typical conditions of fitness for full understanding of beauty and great achievement in thought and art. All their outer environment worked with

[1] Aratra P. p. 71.

[2] See Euripides, *Medea*, 827, Dind.: *ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθέρος.*

the inner acuteness and activity of the Hellenic mind to make Beauty a chief object of life; to make the Beautiful so near a symbol of the Good as to be identifiable with the Good and with Him, the Theion Who was or in Whom was all Good. The words Good and Beautiful were hardly distinguished; and the combination, καλὸς κἀγαθός, denoted all that man or woman could be in nature, character, and conduct. And thus their 'plastic or shaping imagination[1]' led them to represent and set forth all things whatever to the eye: not for pleasure only, but for better sight and understanding. They were wrong; they failed in that clear good sense for which they have been so greatly exalted, in making gods in their own image. Minucius Felix, the Roman lawyer-convert to Christ, observed, with forensic acuteness, in later days, 'that if Man be made in God's image, Man is himself to himself the best image and symbol of God; and he needs not intrude the work of his own hands and mind between God and himself.' Such intrusion is a natural error of all races, it is the first step in all which the Second Commandment forbade to the Hebrew, and in that direction he was always transgressing.

[1] Prof. Blackie 'On Beauty,' p. 1. Disc. i.

§ 4. *Hebrew and Greek Thoughts of Nature.*

When a Hebrew or Greek Argument from Natural Beauty to a Divine Maker is spoken of, it is not of course intended that any such line of reasoning had been formulated, or that men were capable of forming a regular Sorites from the Creation to the Creator before the syllogism had been invented. Nevertheless the faculty of inference always existed, and men were capable of trains of thought, of the very highest character, long before Aristotle's analysis of their formal connexion. And as we derive so many of our own highest thoughts and hopes, and certainly the languages in which both have been transmitted to us, from Hebrews and Greeks, it is reasonable to think, as Prof. M. Arnold has so well said, that our ideas and ways of thinking about God and Nature are divided between a Greek and a Hebrew element in our character and intellect. Some comparison, then, between Hebrew and Greek thoughts of God in Nature, and of what reminded them of Him in Nature by its beauty or grandeur, may be in place here.

As has been said, the Periclean Greeks were young in methodized or philosophical thought: but they were beginning it in a way which led to great results. They have been called the most poetic, imaginative, intellectual, and ideal

race of men that ever existed, or were so till lately. We have since heard them styled the most matter-of-fact people in the world; and all these assertions are true together. They knew how to realize their own ideals: their image-instinct set things clearly before them, and clearness they would have. The intellectual accuracy which made them exact and careful of their own meaning, or mental and outward language, was exactly the same faculty as their subtly correct sense of the Becoming and the Beautiful. They lived more or less in dialectic, or search for as much truth as could be found by correct analysis of terms. Their determination to be as near the real state of things as might be, and to know at least when and where they were deficient, was widely spread by the days of Socrates. One habit of his, taught by all Sophists good and bad, seems, by Aristophanes' account[1], to have given more offence than it ought to have done—it was the constantly repeated question, Τί λέγεις σν; What do you really mean by that? Are you quite sure you understand what you say? Such a habit of mind is invaluable if only it be properly *introverted*, and if a young man will ask that question of himself pretty frequently. He will in that case acquire a habit of proving his own

[1] *Clouds*, 1174, Dind.

spirit and work, and knowing what he really is about, which the great and real geniuses of the world rarely fail in. Now, to cling by perfect meaning and accurate expression is the same good quality in the language of forms and colours as in spoken words or writing. In this the Greeks excelled: but there can be no doubt that their desire for definition, for seeing all round, and clear imagery, led them into gross anthropomorphic error in their view of the Divine. They would have symbols, like Egypt or Assyria, but they would also carry their symbolism forward into imagined Likeness. The Semitic races were less subject to the graphic or imitative faculty with its beauties and its temptations. The Hebrew was forbidden the use of his image-shaping faculty by Revelation, it being definitely connected with remembered worship of false gods in Egypt and elsewhere. He had the knowledge that the Lord his God is One God Who hears prayer: and with that he began in all thought. Then, the Lord having made all things, and many things being most delightful to the eye, that delightfulness was of the Lord; and if He in any sense appeared out of Sion, He would appear in perfect Beauty; in some appearance related to the appearance Israel felt as Beauty in natural things[1]. The

[1] See Psalms xix, civ, etc.

Greek found himself without definite Revelation, but among glorious and good things; and having notions of the Divine as good and glorious, he began to argue from what he saw and felt to that which he felt but could not see. This method, which is our own and that of all Theists, sometimes even now runs a risk of using, or being expressed in, Pantheistic language: but we are not to be accused for saying that God made all things or that His will is manifested in things. We see all nature is His: the Pantheist, in one form or another, says all nature is He[1].

Now, in the first place, both Greeks and Hebrews argued from special scenes, and from landscape, to a special presence of God. That He had made known a chosen place, where He would be solemnly worshipped, ought to have been enough to guard the Hebrew in this argument, but was not. Like other races with less excuse, he wanted to worship in his own way, under some form he liked, and in some place he chose. It might be convenience, which Jeroboam appealed to: it might be the impression of some

[1] Or, mathematically, All Nature = Him. It is right, surely, to say Nature is His; and if it be so one may accept Carlyle's language about the Time-Vesture in *Sartor Resartus*, and indeed Goethe's; which he quotes, from Faust's 'Spirit of the Earth:'

'Tis thus the roaring loom of Time I ply,
And weave for God the *Vesture thou seest Him by.*'

green and great tree, the haunting hush of limestone defiles, or of some dry river-bed and the smooth stones of the stream ; the wide view over all the sacred land from a high-place on the ragged rocks of the hill-top. For all these reasons the Hebrew might use the High-place for prayer, and that seems to have been allowed, though sacrifice there was, or came to be, against the law. For special communion or meditation the Hebrew would get him up into the mountains that hear the Lord's controversy. All this was consistent with strict Monotheism as revealed ; but the Greek view of nature was far more Pantheistic in a less satisfactory sense. It came to consider the world as full of Hemithei and heroes, nymphs, fauns, and dryads ; locally present everywhere, children or manifestations of Deity, making a beautiful presence everywhere in the land, and in all nature. Sometimes they were to be seen, they could always be made images of, and have altars and chapels dedicated to them. The Athenians, in particular, were subject to a national deisidæmonia or superstition, which specially inclined them to service of this kind : and in all men of high or devout mind, persons specially capable of awe, and of enjoying the purity and solemnity of their own woods and hills, these imaginations had no ignoble result in practice. Such men and many

others—perhaps at one time almost the whole of the race—really thought there was a Personal or Spiritual Life in the land, which all came from Zeus somehow, from a higher Zeus, the Father of gods and men, who was indeed author of all, and finally just and beyond fate. These were, in fact, His abiding presence on Attic soil or elsewhere. These elder children of his, titular deities, from a Dryad in an oak to Athene herself in the Parthenon, were a terror to the evil-doer. A foul deed defiled the land. Why? Because it offended the indwelling gods. Oreads and naiads and the like were all about the country like spiritual police; and to do evil on their beat was to vex them immeasurably, and like doing it before Zeus, whoever he is, ὅστις ποθ' ἐστί. This personification of Deity in Nature gives special energy to Demosthenes' deep-throated appeal, ὦ γῆ καὶ θεοί, uttered in open air, in the face of Pallas his goddess, Queen of the Air; and it is well remarked[1], that when divinities (like Apollo, or Here, for instance) are appealed to with unusual seriousness, they are called on as natural powers.

§ 5. *Beauty and Superstition.*

Again, it is worth our notice, that, though Greek sense of beauty was certainly engaged

[1] By Mr. Watkiss Lloyd, *Age of Pericles*, vol. ii. ch. xlviii.

in the service of Greek polytheism, it would be entirely antagonistic to fetichism, or actual worship of the actual image. The great Agalmata of Zeus or Athene were used as representative symbols of the God. It was said by contemporaries that Pheidias has set forth or shown (ἔδειξε) Zeus; and in long after-days Æmilius Paulus (perhaps wishing to conciliate and say the right thing at his visit to Olympia) felt, or said he felt, that Pheidias had given him a new and higher idea about the Deity[1]. But neither Greek nor Roman thought that there was any virtue inherent in the ivory and the gold. Nor do we hear, as far as I am aware, of any miraculous cures wrought by this the greatest sculpture of the world, nor by the Athene or any other work of Pheidias's. Nor is it on record that the Crucifixion, or the Paradise of Tintoret, or any work of Titian's or Rafaelle's performed miraculous cures, or wrought any of the wonders which are still, I believe, to be expected of the Bambinos, or the Black Virgin of Yprès[2]. It is true, too, that Greeks were very like ourselves in differing very much from each other in intellect and spirituality, and also in being very inconsistent with

[1] On Quintilian's authority, C. O. Müller, 'De Pheidiæ Vita,' p. 48.

[2] See a woodcut in Mr. Wyke Bayliss's 'Message of Beauty,' p. 173, with text.

themselves. Under circumstances of panic or temptation, an Athenian might worship Pan, or the Hermæ, or Glaucus the fish-god[1]; and all Greece adored a monstrous Artemis at Ephesus, or a shapeless Delphic Xoanon of Apollo. The fact is that Goethe's often-quoted hexameter—'Wunderthätige Bilder sind meist nur schlechte Gemälde[2]'—is yet wiser and of wider application than it seems. It is quite true: the feeling of the critic (that is to say, of ever so religious a man who remembers that a statue is marble cut by man's hand with more or less beauty) cannot be that of the devotee who wants his image to wink, cry, and throw him into fits. He who can expect the miracle cannot care much for the beauty of the form, and ought not. He who cares for the beauty of the form can hardly expect a miracle. Athenians thought there was an olive-wood statue in the Erectheum which would fall on its knees in supplication if you pulled it off its pedestal. That was miraculous; but they never expected Athene Promachos or of the Parthenon to do anything of the kind.

Beauty, in fact, is not allied to superstition, which deals far more with terror, and will use the most hideous means to impress it. And

[1] A sort of copy of Dagon.

[2] 'Miracle-working pictures are generally rather bad paintings.'

superstition, as Goethe implies, affects a kind of person who is below caring for Beauty, or who cannot get high thoughts from the sight of her. The worse kind of Athenian did not want to look at or think about Zeus, the Divine Father, who will punish, and set wrong right; nor at Athene, Queen of Purity and Valour, Honour and Healthy Wisdom. He wanted to get power with the unseen rulers, by means of pharmaka and incantations, and mysteries of minor deities. Priests said they knew how to persuade their gods to take any side, right or wrong, on due payment of fees. Nicias, who was afraid of the new moon, and Critias, who stuck at nothing, probably made use of the same means of getting the gods on their side. The old Homeric mythology was bad enough; but it by no means improved as polytheism grew more crowded with new objects of worship. The popular Pantheism of cool grot and haunted oak became vulgarized and died out of the land as a faith, chiefly because Greek morals were depraved with war and slavery and their attendant licence; and men grew too fierce and foul to abide the nymphs or Pan. They could think of Zeus no more as the One Theion. They had laid the rein altogether on the neck of their lusts, and would have no more of Pallas severely fair. They and their sculpture went off to the service of Dionysus and

Aphrodite, and their nature-worship ended in orgie. The beauty they followed ceased to have a theology or divine message for them, because they ceased to look for one.

It is no wonder if Plato turned away from a disreputable mythology, and from its exponents in art and poetry. He seems to have mastered the thought that Beauty was a divine hand-mark impressed on visible things, and that that was sign enough of God or of the Theion. And it may be observed in Acts xvii. 23 how St. Paul quietly sets aside all the idols of mythology and their vain beauty, though the whole city was full of them, and addresses the monotheistic instinct which underlay Athenian devotion to the Unknown God. He declares One whom they ignorantly worshipped. We owe it chiefly to Prof. Zeller, that it is now understood how far the practical Greek mind ranged beyond mythology and the Homeric Zeus, even to the thought of a Θεῖον, a Supreme Fate and Higher Zeus; in some real sense the Father and the Judge who will do right. To Him Socrates prayed always, and his dæmonic or spiritual guidance was indeed with Socrates to keep him from sin and error[1]. Athe-

[1] In 'Social Life in Greece,' at p. 369, ed. ii. Prof. Mahaffy remarks strongly on the substratum of Attic orthodoxy and natural Theism up to the Demosthenic age. He quotes Xenophon, Œconom. xvii. to express 'the attitude of looking to One

nians who had desired and sought such guidance, however blindly, would have little difficulty in following the new teacher on Mars' Hill, and some such, at least, clave to him.

§ 6. *Plato's Search of the Idea of Beauty.*

Plato, then, substituted his ideas of Beauty, or conceptions about it, drawn from beautiful things to be seen in the world, for mythologic personations, for the phantasmagoria of images, marble and mental, which the plastic invention of the Greek had formed. As ordinary men of the better sort referred the nature and being of all things to the Theion, so Plato centered all things material and spiritual in the Divine Idea. It is quite easy to see that a religious hypothesis of Beauty, a Natural Theology of Natural Beauty, is exactly what Plato wanted, and that he did formulate it successfully enough. What would not Christian Faith or Theology have been to him? He wanted a Divine One and Many, an Unity of Providential Control of all things, and that too by their own will and nature; a reconciling Power to renovate their will and nature; an Infinite in the Finite. The sum of all he

Supreme God, especially as ruler of the weather;' and notes how easily that fell in with Christian doctrine. Demosthenes certainly addresses an orthodox public.

needed may be expressed in the doctrine of God incarnate in man.

His argument, from phænomenal and visible Beauty to the Idea of Beauty, which is (so to speak) in the Divine Mind, may be now attempted. As far as our human reason can go, we are stopped by the same conditions of thought as he, having reached nearly the same hypothesis, which, after all the ages, we can scarcely put in better words than his[1].

In common with all his race, he saw physical beauty everywhere, in things great and small,—without accurate distinction as yet between different phases of Beauty, but with a conviction that the same quality or nature went by that same name in all varieties of things. He saw secondary beauty, or excellent contrivance; he saw pure outer charms of colour and form; he assuredly saw and felt moral beauty also. He was not ready with distinctions between them; perhaps because the word καλόν was applied to all; and this causes some confusion in the Hippias. Socrates makes his Sophist admit at the beginning that no beauty can equal that of the immortal Gods; but the dialogue is entirely inconclusive, and seems more intended to show the difficulties of enquiry into the actual prin-

[1] The Dialogues entitled Hippias Major, Phædrus, and Symposium, should be referred to or read through on this matter.

ciples of Beauty than anything else. The useful (χρήσιμον), the fit or becoming (πρέπον), and the effective (δυνατόν) are all tried, and the first and last, had they been combined and followed out, might have led to considerations of adaptation and design, and the combined argument from delightful exterior as joined to benevolent contrivance. But the real question remains unanswered, What is that, then, which is beauty in man or woman, in horse, dog, ox, statue and picture, and so on down to furniture and utensils? It will be remembered here how Greeks had for centuries learned to make the meanest instruments and vessels of ordinary life beautiful in form and colour, in fitness for their work and proportions of shape; and this may account for the somewhat teasing references to beautiful spoons, shoes, pots, and the like. It may have lain unexpressed in the mind of Plato or his master, that God made man beautiful in his way, and enabled man to make crateres and amphoræ beautiful in theirs. At all events, that idea would have saved him much torment of good Greek, and his readers much weariness. Still that is partly atoned for to many, by the wonderful picture he gives of great minds in which philosophical method was forming and yet unformed; who had no formal logic, or definitions of definition; and who were really obliged

to take one popular term or notion after another and ransack all its meanings, good and bad, to find the essential one. But the great thing is that Plato unquestionably felt after God, and felt that Beauty was one way to Him. We have ourselves no better expression for it than Mozley's, that 'it stands on the threshold of the mystical world, and excites our curiosity about God.' That it is symbolic of God is as far as we can get; and Plato was there before us in speculative imagination.

§ 7. *The Soul's Remembrance of Beauty.*

Plato's doctrine of Anamnesis or remembrance may be fairly well expressed, as to Beauty, in Wordsworth's lines, which it probably occasioned:—

> 'Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
> From God, who is our home.'

Absolute or pure Beauty is not in this world. But the Soul has seen her, in the body or out of the body[1]. 'We saw her once shining in company with the forms of heaven; and being come to earth, we find her here, shining in clearness through the clearest aperture of sense, *for sight is the keenest of our bodily senses*—

[1] Jowett's 'Plato,' *Phædrus*, i. pp. 584, 5.

"though not by that is wisdom seen."' The present terrestrial life[1] carries within itself the sleeping memory, so to speak, of a higher celestial life which has preceded it; and our whole process of knowing and feeling on earth may, without stretch of metaphor, be most aptly compared to a gradually-awakened reminiscence of divine visions of goodness, truth, and loveliness, which the soul enjoyed when it followed, before it was clad in flesh, the gods above in their super-celestial courses. The soul has a faculty of delight in whatever stirs its essentially divine nature: and Plato calls that in figure the wings of the spirit. Some there are who have corrupted or lost the vision of heaven which was theirs: and they see visible or actual beauty in the world, but it does not stir in them that true love or aspiration towards the 'foregone things' which ought to quicken their wings into action and growth. They have no awe or reverence, there is none of the unutterable in them: they cannot look beyond their earthly vision, or believe without seeing; they are shut in themselves; their souls' wings will not grow. Herein they are less uncomfortable than the better sort, when theirs do. For the process of such growth is painful; Eros, the Higher love of Beauty, makes Pteros the fluttering-rudimentary wing

[1] Blackie, p. 200.

of the soul to work and flap, and develope painfully, and flutter the soul. But the wings grow by fluttering.

No better image for the aspiration of genius, or of faith and hope, could be set forth by man: and the whole allegory amounts to this, that Beauty is of God, that He makes every man to see it, which is to love it and Him: and that man must here see and love in mystery; in concrete and in nature;—for himself individually, according to the hold of Divine love upon him. So we can do no good thing without our self or will, though God works all in us to will and to do. Plato's vast Athenian experience, both of the Beautiful and its utter corruption in man, gave him a sense of hopeful discipline and aspiration, which was in fact highly practical; and of which Aristotle makes ample use in his disciplinary system, which seems best of all heathen philosophies to provide for repentance and turning from evil.

§ 8. *Anamnesis and Natural Beauty.*

The sight of Natural Beauty, say of mountains, seas, or sunsets, had similar effect on the Greek who felt after God, as on ourselves; represented (according to our quotations) by Wordsworth or Mozley. Such sights stirred up his Anamnesis,

the innate love and desire of his soul for all higher, i. e. more spiritual things. With all our gifts of greater knowledge on the spiritual side, of the true source of aspiration, and the real meaning of inspiration, we do well to understand how far it may have pleased God to lead the chosen among His ethnic servants; although they, like us, were unfaithful and unequal to the good they had. For a time, and with a certain class of men, human excellence of soul and body, taken as closely related, formed a standard of good, visible and recognizable in this world. Moral beauty was associated with physical; and an instinct for moral beauty grew up to aid man's moral sense, and was, for a time and with many, effective. The humorous ugliness and grotesque strength of Socrates were a standing admonition that the real inner nobility of goodness could dispense with the charms of Alcibiades after all, although it was felt that outward beauty was symbolic of that which should be within. But as men fell away from the great moral standards of life, which Greeks under the strain of the Peloponnesian War did with dreadful rapidity, Beauty had to take the place of right as a standard of life, and could not fill that part alone. Conduct can never be a matter of æsthetics. For a time, as Mr. W. Lloyd says, it was 'a peculiar characteristic of

the Hellenic race to rely, in unhesitating faith, on the æsthetically beautiful for guidance into the essentially good and universally true.' To this Plato certainly pointed the way. The Sophron, the model Greek, perfect in form, balanced in character, well aware of his powers and not overrating them, knowing what is fit for him to do and able to do it, disciplined in self-restraint and the true balance of justice between himself and all men and things, made a good enough ideal of the best attainable manhood. But when such realized ideals failed; when the bravest and best were gone; when Critias and Antiphon took the place of Cimon and Pericles; when all the race had fallen away into civil rage or reckless sensuality—then mere pleasure took the place of that Beauty, which had once been, at least, a Gentile shadow of the beauty of holiness.

It is not part of our work here to attempt description of the method or extent of the Athenian cultus of Beauty by the arts of the theatre or of the temple, by sculpture or tragedy. It is enough to say that all were united in solemn worship of Demeter, Athene, and Dionysus. A nature worship of the higher kind appealed to Art and Beauty as ministering influences; but when faith and hope had departed from the worship, its beauty lost its higher

meaning. Men had no more hope of finding God through it.

Nevertheless the Christian reader may do worse than read and remember the following passage from the Symposium[1]. To this the Sophron, the lover of Beauty, trained in self-restraint and the better choice, shall come at last. 'And at last the vision is revealed to him; the vision of a single knowledge; which is the science of Beauty everywhere. He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes to the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty (and this, O Socrates, is the final cause of all our toils)—a nature, which in the first place is everlasting:—not growing or decaying, or waxing and waning:—which is, in the next place, not fair in one point of view and foul in the other; or at one time: or in one relation . . but Beauty only—absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting: which, without diminution, or increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of other things. He, who under the influence of true love *rising upwards from these things*, begins to see that Beauty, is not far from the end. And the true

[1] Jowett's 'Plato,' *Symposium*, i. pp. 517 and 526, ed. 1871; ii. p. 61, ed. 1875.

order of *going or being is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which* one mounts upwards for the sake of that other Beauty; going to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, *and from fair practices to fair thoughts*, until from fair thoughts he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is ....

'What if man had eyes to see the true Beauty? the Divine beauty I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and the colours and vanities of human life—gazing and holding converse with the true beauty divine and simple? Do you not see that in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to produce, not images of beauty but realities (for he has not hold of an image, but of a reality): and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue, to become the friend of God. if mortal man may.'

These words are put in the mouth of Diotima the priestess of Mantinea, the supposed instructress of Socrates. It is not very material if she was a real personage or a personification: but her testimony amounts to this—that he who has faced and considered concrete visible beauty as he finds it here, until he can look at it without passion, only with pure discriminating

love, for its own sake, will be led to look higher for it, and get it purer from higher sources; until he comes to understand the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, even the true and final Source.

It seems worth while to have said and quoted thus much, by way of illustrating the old Greek forms, both popular and philosophic, of the Theology of Natural Beauty.

CHAPTER IV.

Roman and Renaissance.

It is not so easy to trace the connexion of Natural Beauty with Religion in the Roman or even the earlier Italian races, as it is to account for its absence. From its earliest civilization, the Roman life and mind were practical and military, and early Roman worship was not of nature, but domestic and sepulchral. It was dependent on the family and the hearth-fire, which, personified as Vesta, was the first object of adoration to the household[1], and was connected with the tombs and images of forefathers, late priests of the fire as chiefs of the family, rather than with temples and agalmata of gods and heroes who represented the powers of Nature.

Roman religion dealt with man and his duty to Gods unseen; at least in the first instance,

[1] See Coulange's *Cité Antique*, translated and edited under the title of 'Aryan Civilization,' by the Rev. T. Childe Barker, Vicar of Spelsbury, Oxfordshire, and late Student of Ch. Ch.

when, as Plutarch says, before the time of the first Tarquin there were no images of the Deities. They never invented a mythology of personifications, or peopled their woods and rivers with beauty of their own fancies. The Sylvan and Camena were supposed to exist, and heard of in the days of the Kings: but the real business of life was with Diespiter for justice, Mavors and the wolf for victory, and Pales and one's own Lares for stock and private business. God was with a man in battle or by his hearth; not specially present in Nature; Rome was given to ordering Nature her own way. The Dryads of Italian or British forests were not regarded when the Appian Way or Watling Street were constructed; and Curius Dentatus turned the Velino over the rocks of Narni without consulting the wishes of the river-god. The Roman had none of the imaginative pantheism which brought the cultus of natural beauty home to the Greek, nor did he think of finding the good through moral and physical beauty. His earlier domestic virtues and responsibilities were 'good' enough; and his faithfulness to his word and his wife gave him great advantages over the speculative immoralist. He was not without regard for the fields he knew and the mountains of his home: but he chose to show that love chiefly by conquest, and by bringing home the spoils

of other lands. He had no natural taste for representative beauty, to make him study nature: he was occupied with war, politics, agriculture, administration, the constructive side of architecture, roads, drainage, and engineering, law and pleading. There was a time, about the Second Punic War, when a Roman-Etruscan school of art certainly existed; and it must have studied Nature to some purpose, if, as seems likely, it produced the Capitoline Wolf, which every visitor to Rome must well remember. But within (probably) about fifty years of the date of that work the vast importation of Greek works of art began.

It is always easier to collect than to produce works of beauty; and particularly so to a conquering and plundering metropolis: and not long after the conquest of Greece it seems to have been the general feeling of the conquerors that a practically unlimited supply of works of art or beauty was to be had for the taking; so that any sense of Natural Beauty they may have had expressed itself in little else than plunder. The Scipios and all the Æmilian family seem to have been honourable exceptions, as men desirous of Greek culture, sensible that Rome really needed that most of all things. But the art of Corinth, and Greek manners in general, by no means convinced men like Mummius or

Metellus that Art and Natural Beauty were very elevating things after all.

It is not necessary for us to examine the older Roman suspicions of Greek character, learning, and religion. Cicero must always be considered the greatest disciple of Greece in the day of Roman power: but before we come to his singularly clear and perfect testimony on natural contrivance and beauty, it should be added that the increasing fierceness and cruelty of the Roman character, from the Social Wars, was of itself enough to interfere very seriously with all feelings of natural religion. As to contemplative sense of Natural Beauty, and consequent adoration of a Creator, they can hardly exist in a continual state of aggressive war, where men see nothing but evil; and a few gladiatorial exhibitions in a conquering city will effectually cure her people of artistic tastes. It will be seen that, for whatever reason in the purposes of God, the study of Natural Beauty was destined to vanish for a time from the education of the world, sinking with the immoral decadence of Athenian art. Men had at first learnt to see a beauty in nature, which led them to consider of the qualities of God. Then they had persisted in looking at only one kind of beauty; and that not the best, but highly uncertain and transitory. They had

substituted pleasure for pure beauty; and by infallible law of nature they lost their hold on the latter, and their enjoyment of the former. Greece had brought her people's delight in beauty to a decided indecency in the theatre and elsewhere. Rome took the further step of cultivating a popular taste for cruelty and ferocity. It may have been advisable for conquest; not that it taught her citizens courage or endurance in the field. They had possessed that for centuries, before the gladiator had ever existed; and when they began to lose their disciplined valour, ferocity could never take its place. There can be no doubt that the gladiatorial exhibitions made the taste for art almost impossible; and with it the study of beauty; and with that, all insight into its source and nature. Had such study arisen in Rome, it would probably have begun like the yet living and powerful school of our own age and country: with observation and record of landscape, or in which landscape was a chief motive. The name of Ludius[1] may perhaps be connected with the

[1] Ludius was the name, it is supposed, of the chief landscape-painter of the Augustan age, and the Pompeian scenery and backgrounds may be taken as specimens of his school. The existence of another Ludius, some generations before, is altogether uncertain. Mr. Parker's photographs should be consulted for Roman paintings of natural subjects, particularly those of the

beautiful decorations of the so-called *Villa ad Gallinas* of Livia, in the neighbourhood of Rome, excavated in 1863. A whole chamber is treated as a luxuriant garden, having all four walls painted accordingly with accurate realism and great skill[1]: and the large and famous Odyssey landscapes[2] (from the Esquiline, 1848–1850) prove a decided taste for scenery. One is reminded, in looking at them, of the blue horizon and cavernous shore of the Mediterranean; of Virgil and Parthenope. And indeed his descriptions in the Georgics, and some reflections (like those on the instinct and wonderful works of his bees) lead us to see that the Argument from Beauty lay open to Romans as well as to ancient Greeks or modern Englishmen.

But Cicero's use of it is conclusive. He may be said according to his lights, religious and scientific, to have anticipated Paley's argument, and even, in forecast, those of Sir Charles Bell and Dr. Mozley[3]. That is to say, he argues

Villa Pamphili-Doria, the tomb of Statilius Taurus, and many Pompeian subjects.

[1] For this subject see Woltmann, 'History of Painting in Ancient Greece and Italy,' vol. i. p. 118.

[2] Ibid. p. 115.

[3] Cicero states the arguments on the negative side freely and fairly, but seems to show special vigour and personal interest in the Stoic affirmative. In any case, he is putting forward the consensus of a great and ancient school of philosophy, confirmed by an unexhausted vein of popular or human feeling.

from contrivance, from beauty, and from the construction of the hand, in particular, as a contrived instrument to execute all other devices. The following passages from the 'De Natura Deorum' may speak for themselves; and as they are put in the mouth of a Stoic philosopher, we may suppose them to have been known in some degree to thinking men of the last century B.C. It is comforting to think that the Greek substratum of faith in a God of Nature could thus be appealed to among Romans; but we shall find, and we have partly seen, that it is universal, and exists in the soul of man, everywhere and at all times. Under a Revelation expressed in a definite Creed, it will not be put forth as a leading tenet: it will be more or less referred to in different ages and places, but it is always there, if we call it the inheritance of Aryan religion of nature, or if we are content with the same fact in St. Paul's words[1] to the people of Lystra, even in the act of idolatrous sacrifice: 'He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.'

Cicero's line of thought and tone of argument are quite consistent with this. 'Who ever

[1] Acts xiv. 17.

named the man,' he says, 'who could see such regular movements of the heavenly host, and the succession of the stars so fully calculated, and all things so related and in correspondence with each other, and say all this was done by chance, when we cannot apprehend by any calculation (studium) of our own the amount of calculation by which these things go on? When we see anything move by mechanism, like a sphere or dial[1], or ever so many such things, we do not hesitate about their being the work of Reason; and when we see the mighty motion of the firmament (caeli impetum), etc.'[2] 'Surely we may now give up mere hair-splitting in dispute, and open our eyes, and look at the beauty of these things, which we say were supernaturally ordered by Divine Providence.'

He then goes on to the earth, set in the midst . . . clad with flowers and herbs, trees and corn-crops—in unknown number, with unresting variety—cool ever-flowing fountains, transparent course of rivers, the intense green clothing of their banks, the hollow and lofty defiles, the wildness of high cliffs, the loftiness of overhanging mountains, and wide sweep of the plains—hidden veins of gold and silver, and endless supply of marble . . . beasts wild

[1] Compare Bernhard Nieuwentyt's and Paley's example of the clock or watch.

[2] De N. D. ii. 38 *ad fin.*

and tame, birds of song and flight, feeding flocks and herds—and that life of wild natural things . . . the children of men to cultivate and tame earth and the creatures, and to be builders of houses and cities . . . And how great is the beauty of the sea—the sight of the wide ocean, the number of various islands, the fair expanse of shores and bays . . . He returns to astronomy, and again to the vegetable and animal creation, to instincts, anatomical structure, winds and tides—all for the service of man. 'For whose sake are you to say the world was made? For those living creatures who have reason, for Gods and men[1].'

All this differs from Paley's argument, as an argument, no more than Paley's first edition differs from that so lately issued in due accordance with the progress of physical science since his time. In arguing thus, Cicero spoke to Rome, and through her to the Middle Ages, to Italy, Germany, and the North—to Nieuwentyt, and to Paley who read him; and to ourselves who read Paley. This is the consensus of natural religion in all time, reappearing in Dante and Chaucer and all the choir of Christian poets. The body of their testimony cannot be more than named in this book, for want of space; but it has been thoughtfully set forth, with fully sufficient quotation and re-

[1] De N. D. ii. *ad fin.*

ference, by Principal Shairp in his 'Lectures on Poetic Interpretation of Nature.' But before we leave Cicero, there is another passage[1] in which he describes the human hands and their uses in a manner which certainly may have been a model for Paley's method of statement, and which points out, with great sagacity, how the hand is not only itself a contrivance, but the planned and destined instrument of further contrivance.

'How adapted to purpose are the hands (which) nature has given man, and in how many arts do they serve him! The contraction of the fingers is easy, and their extension is never awkward in any movement, through their pliant knuckles and joints. So that the hand is prepared, by motion of its fingers, for painting, for modelling, for sculpture — to draw forth the notes of stringed instruments and pipes. This for the sake of pleasure: but as works of necessity I may speak of agriculture and house-building; of bodily garments woven and sewn, of all work in brass and iron — from which you may understand that we have succeeded in all these things by applying the hands of the artificer to the ideas of the mind, understood by the senses: so that we are sheltered, clad, and in safety: so that we possess cities, walls, dwelling-houses, and temples.'

[1] De N. D. ii. 60.

Paley instances two kinds of action only, those of instrumental music and of writing: he might have added painting, with Cicero: but the agreement is very complete and remarkable.

This quotation from Cicero seems of the more importance as it connects the testimony of Greek thought with the current of Roman speculation in the first centuries, before and after the coming of Christ. But more than that, it points out that the appeal to Natural Beauty and structure for the existence of a Benevolent Creator was not matter of philosophical speculation, but the natural inference of popular thought and common sense. It shows that Cicero felt that Beauty ought in all men (in Mozley's words) to awaken a reasonable curiosity about God: whereas the high point of agnosticism in all ages, Epicurean, Pyrrhonist, or pessimist, has always been to be incurious on the subject. Not many years intervened between Cicero's death, in B.C. 43, and the teaching of another Voice than his, which summed up and authorized, for all time, the world-old and human argument for the work and the glory of God on this earth. 'Behold the fowls of the air,' it is written; 'behold the lilies of the field: Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' This would seem like a command to the whole Church,

bidding her not neglect the ever-present gospel of God's works. Yet we do not hear—it has fallen out of record, in the vast and various history of the faith, its teaching, and its vicissitudes—in what ways or how vigorously these words were dwelt on. They have always been part of private meditation, rather than of theological teaching. For century after century the records of the Christian faith are filled with its own definite teaching of the coming, life, and death of Him who is both God and Man. A definitely supernatural revelation had to be given to the world. Men had in fact to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, Redeemer and Judge of themselves, and all heaven and earth. They needed not to feel after Him now, but to hear Him. He had spoken and lived and died, there had been open vision of One who was God. It may have seemed that human speculation was over. The Gospel history was preached: His Record and His Church were left for all who would be His. It is easy to imagine the happiness with which speculative seekers after God, as the great eternal Good, must have accepted the news that He had come, and would come again, and meanwhile had provided His Church or assembly of all souls who loved Him, here and in the world of spirits. All the pleasant mythological Pan-

theism of Greece perished before the new and piercing message, that the God of Israel was One God of all men, and in the latter days had made known His Son. Shadows and images fled away; it was cried over the sea from the shore of Paxos that Pan was dead. The old earth-gods and nature-worship had done their part, and done their best, and that best had been but shadow. Now there was certain knowledge of judgment, and of heaven; and also of justice and fiery indignation. A great call to repentance from sin went through a world deep in sin. A new code of morals, an inner and outer life of purity; peace and truth, such as man had never known before, were all set before man for his life; and at the end of his life of trial stood his Lord. The old search for God through Beauty and Nature had not found Him thus, to say the least; Christians, it seemed, had other things to study, if they would serve their Master.

So it was, that we hear very little of Natural Design or Beauty as a symbolic argument of God the Creator for the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian Faith. That it still came home, as God would have it, to the individual heart; that it was still a root and bulwark of Natural Religion in the soul; that it still sanctified the rude vigour and glad intensity of

Northern life, we know chiefly from poets—from Virgil to Dante and Chaucer, from Shakspere and Milton; from the pure delight of all these Titans in the life of Nature, in changing seasons, in storm and sunshine, above all in the scenery of their own land as part of its life, and in the fields where their own people dwelt pleasantly. The reflective study of Nature in her inner and outer frame, in construction and in beauty, was not again formulated as argument, till a fresh scientific method had been inaugurated, and till structure began to be examined from the lay side as it never had been examined before. It is at length, and with difficulty, understood on all hands that natural science occupies a ground of its own; and rightfully appeals to methods and demonstrations of its own; and that Theology cannot attempt to control its investigations. She may put her own interpretations on them, and the world must judge alike of their sincerity and their accuracy; she knows only, but knows always, that Natural Truth must be one with Divine Truth. Her argument from structure is scientific, but not esoteric; it is matter of acknowledged fact and common sense, as it always was. Her argument from Beauty appeals to personal instincts of adoration, recognized in the Bible, the Vedas, and the earliest known formations of human language.

CHAPTER V.

Modern Naturalist Landscape-Beauty.

Without reflecting on mediæval religion, on the dogmatic system of the Roman Catholic Church, or the methods by which her representatives have at various times endeavoured to enforce it, it must be said that her influence over the mind of Europe was unfavourable to the study of Nature, either as to structure or the delight of external beauty. The clergy all along suspected physical science, anatomy, and analysis, which went against structural study; and the ascetic principle, dominating many very sensitive and also influential minds, seldom partook in, and sometimes forbade, the enjoyment of external Nature. The human argument to God from His works went on, where men had heart and happiness to look up to Him. In good men and women, its promptings and suggestions fell in with and supported their dogmatic creed; and went, with the slender instruction of those days, to form a lay or personal religion, such as has ever done its work with little notice from history. But it may be said that but few traces of close study of nature are to be found till the twelfth century; and that

for many ages the human intellect had enough to do with renascence and recovery of the past work of the human mind. Still, as in the early landscape of Giotto and Orcagna, and the MSS. from the same date, so in Dante's and Chaucer's poetry, there are frequent and beautiful backgrounds of natural subject. Man cannot avoid the influence of his surroundings, the sea and the mountains must have their appeal to him: he must love his own woods and rivers, and the flowers of the field will testify to him even till the end of time.

But there is no doubt that ascetic and monastic religion made little appeal to the human inference from natural beauty. That was left to the lay mind, which formed its instinctive conclusions, as of old, from the sight of external growth and life. The strong English feeling for Nature is happily and sometimes piously expressed in Chaucer and Shakspere: Stratford meadows, Ardennes and the greenwood, May 'and all her reckless birds upon the wing,' daisies pied and violets blue, the cuckoo and the owl,—in these things to our race there is pleasure for evermore while the world lasts, and we still express it in their delightful words. Shakspere is not reflective in the country, his eyes are too open to all form and colour and sounds of joy; nor does he ever flourish reflection, or project morals. Still

one feels that pure happiness of his fields lifts him for a time above earth, like Isaac Walton in his time. Nevertheless it may be said that from the sixteenth century neither religion nor literature cared sufficiently for Nature and her lessons; neither for her structure and its science, nor for her beauty and its art: and it is therefore of special interest to read the Allegro and Penseroso, the Shaksperian woodnotes wild of Milton's youth. In them Nature breaks forth into English literature once more, before the years of hatred and civil strife, and vice and shame; and she withdraws again till the first timid notes of eighteenth-century poets, and the earliest touches of Sandby and Rooker, Croome and Robson, and the near precursors or companions of Turner. The painters had all to learn from Nature: the poets were weary of towns and coffee-houses, and half-hampered in classical allusion and Virgilian translation. But both were surely on the trace of the ancient and ever-new happiness of the natural man, and were preparing to learn its lessons.

We believe Wordsworth and Turner never paid much attention to each other's works; and we are not informed that either of them read Paley's, though Wordsworth must have done so at St. John's, Cambridge. Three such men would have had difficulty in appreciating each other,

having little in common excepting high capacity and perfect freedom from affectation. Nobody ever accused Wordsworth of anything like falsehood in his ascetic contemplation: the archdeacon manfully made the best of both worlds; the painter led his two lives between high thought and coarse habits as well as he could. And it is one of the very serious difficulties of this small book, difficulties which must make it for the present little more than a fragmentary attempt, that its endeavour is to reduce to some logical form the evidence for God, and ultimately for the Christian Faith, which is derivable from the lives and thoughts of these considerable persons, with those of other men of similar degree in power. These men may be taken to represent the double or inseparable argument: from the Design-evidence, and from evidence of Beauty, in Nature. They represent scientific argument for the Creator, and that of reason awakened by emotion; they represent the testimony of the world of sentiment and the world of intellect. But it will be convenient in our future dealing with this argument to substitute Prof. Ruskin for Wordsworth: partly because his extensive knowledge of the natural sciences of Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, and Meteorology, gives us right to look upon him as being in himself a competent and skilled witness in both our lines of reason-

ing. Besides, though his estimate of Wordsworth's greatness, or of his position in English poesy, seems to have lowered of late to a tone of scarcely becoming depreciation, he has unquestionably learned and thought much valuable matter, either drawn from Wordsworth, or to which Wordsworth has helped him. His testimony is valid as that of a poet-philosopher, of a practical painter from nature, and of a scientific observer of her outer aspects; in fact as a field naturalist. For these reasons, as has been said above, his evidence will be taken as the summary of our case. But we have now to compare the emotional or contemplative view of outer nature with the scientific view of structure. For the first, we have appealed to the earliest documents which record human emotion or speculation, and are appealing to poets and painters, and chiefly to the latter, for the remaining purposes of our argument. For the second, Paley's Natural Theology, as recently re-issued[1], may fairly represent it. The work of Sir E. Beckett[2] must stand for an unavoidable ultimatum against the position of utter materialism. It seems irrefragable, and to it not only Christian savans and sentimentalists, but all sane men, must be driven, if they cannot rest

[1] S. P. C. K. 1873.

[2] 'Origin of the Laws of Nature,' S. P. C. K. Ed. II, 1880.

content to account for all things, thoughts, and emotions, by mere phrases like 'atomic force' or 'potency of matter.' To assert the supernatural means no less than to assert the being and power of a Living God: and everybody who believes in his own spiritual existence as distinct from his own body practically asserts the supernatural. In so doing, as has been said, we incur the charge of *petitio principii*; but so do all hypotheses whatever, excepting perhaps those of pure mathematics; and geometry, at all events, has its postulates and axioms.

We are aware of the prejudice which such a work as this may excite, by appealing to sentiment or emotion at all, and further, by not scientifically separating views drawn from it from the views of science or of intellect. We have to submit that such separation is only possible on paper, not in the practical determinations of thought and life. We shall have to appeal, and we are appealing, to men and women, in whom intellect and sentiment are in fact and beyond a certain point inseparable, whose judgment or reason is affected by feelings, moral and other, on all such subjects as that which we are discussing. Certain sentiments of awe and admiration result as naturally, we are told by Prof. Tyndall and others[1], and

[1] See p. 3.

with perfect truth, from the wonders of structure which science observes and records, as from the external forms and colours which are preserved for us in poetic description or on the painter's canvas. These are real; their validity is confessed. It is perhaps possible to state our argument in a sorites or series of connected formal syllogisms: it is hoped that any logician who reads this work will be able to do so; but when he has completed his task in proper form and symbol, he will have good reason to remember Aristotle's well-worn distinction in Eth. I. iii. 'It is the part of a well-taught man to insist on exact truth in necessary or in contingent matter, only so far as the nature of his subject admits. For it is nearly the same thing to require demonstrations of a man speaking on the language and matters of common life (*ῥητορικόν*), as to allow a mathematician to talk to you of probabilities[1].'

It will be seen that Paley's argument from Designed Structure appeals in fact to sentiments of admiration, which may rise to awe and wonder; feelings closely enough connected with the admiration excited by exterior beauty; and to it we now proceed.

[1] *Πεπαιδευμένου γάρ ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τἀκριβὲς ἐπιζητεῖν καθ' ἕκαστον γένος, ἐφ' ὅσον ἡ τοῦ πράγματος φύσις ἐπιδέχεται· παραπλήσιον γὰρ φαίνεται μαθηματικοῦ τε πιθανολογοῦντος ἀποδέχεσθαι καὶ ῥητορικὸν ἀποδείξεις ἀπαιτεῖν. Eth.* I. iii. 4.

CHAPTER VI.

Design within and Beauty without.

§ 1. *Free Use of the word Beauty.*

From poverty of human language, it seems impossible to avoid using the word Beauty in various shades or variations of the same meaning. As has been said, it is both objective and subjective; people hold an object beautiful for various reasons, but on examination can generally agree on the same natural inherent quality in it, which causes their admiration and makes them experience beauty[1].

We have to use the term as partly synonymous with, or rather as inclusive of, excellence in ingenuity, splendour, sublimity; and by analogy, greatness or goodness. The word must be so applied under protest; but this is uni-

[1] Cp. Blackie, on 'Beauty,' where the principles of Order, Congruity or Harmony, the Humorous (perhaps Graphic or Characteristic), Actuality, Sublimity, Contrast, Religion, Expression, are enumerated as elements recognised in Beauty. The Discourses should be studied.

versally done. In its narrowest sense of pure beauty to sight, it will cover ideas derived from form and colour, from depth, height, horizon, light and shade, all which can be reduced to emotion of delight received by the eye. It is thought that a character or capacity of exciting such delight may have been affixed on earthly things when God saw all that He had made, and saw that it was very good. Whatever these words mean, they have a meaning, and what is to be said here is intended for those who are inclined to attend to it. We now take interior beauty of excellent contrivance within, as distinguished from exterior beauty of pure pleasure, or delight of the eye. In some of Prof. Ruskin's writings, the former is called Dædal or Dædalian beauty, the golden honeycomb of Dædalus for Aphrodite Erycina being taken as the Greek type of delightfully-excellent construction; the Dædalian saw and potter's wheel as examples of excellence in ingenuity[1].

§ 2. *Sight.*

Paley's leading example, of which the rest of his work is an enlargement or multiplication, is taken from the interior structure of the eye, which may be said in man to unite the objective and

[1] Aratra Pent. p. 204.

subjective sides of beauty, as it sees beauty, and is itself beautiful; the latter, also, in two senses—of interior contrivance and external form and colour. It may be well for our purpose to begin with the organ of sight, since a certain pre-eminence seems to belong to it in respect of its universality and most vivid appeal to the intellect and also to the soul. Not only is it true that seeing is believing, but the sight of a competent and honest person, when put in evidence, has the greatest moral weight in the most difficult matters. This would lead away into the whole subject of evidence[1]; nevertheless it shows how large a part of our intelligence is directed by this chief sense, which arouses and sways the emotions with equal power[2]. From Plato to Dr. Mozley the same close inseparable relation of the vision of the soul and the vision of the eye is not only maintained, but understood in every sentence

[1] See Babbage's mathematical calculation, in his Ninth Bridgwater Treatise, quoted by Sir E. Beckett, 'Origin of the Laws of Nature,' p. 17: 'Chances of a billion to one against an event would be overborne by the concurrent, independent, and unbiassed testimony of only twenty-five men who each speak truth ten times as often as they lie.'

[2] We shall have to quote Plato's view of the sight of true beauty and its emotions being the way to knowledge of the good, and of God, from the three dialogues Phaedrus, Hippias, and the Symposium. See also Dr. Mozley, on Nature, 'University Sermons,' pp. 154, 5; cf. p. 145. (Blackie, on 'Beauty,' p. 87 note, and ref. to Hippias Major, 299 A.)

and all forms of expression; and it is very curious indeed to observe the extreme similarity of idea in the Greek arch-philosopher and the English doctor. It has been shown how Plato promises to lead the soul into the knowledge of the Divine Idea through sights of best earthly beauty; not only as types, but as forecasts; and that Mozley shows how Scripture has specially consecrated the faculty of sight; has put forth the praise of God as visible in the beauty of God's works, in the first place; and in the second, held forth and promised the manifestation of God to mankind through the medium of a great sight. 'This,' he says, 'seems to break through the clouds in the prophetic visions' (as Ezekiel's, especially at ver. 28, chap. i), 'the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord;' but in the New Testament the promise of sight issues in the doctrine of the Visio Dei. 'It is a sight, a picture, a representation, that constitutes the heavenly state; not mere thought and contemplation. Heaven specially appears in Scripture as the sphere of perfected sight, where the faculty is raised and exalted to its highest act, and the happiness of existence culminates in vision.'

§ 3. *Paley on the Eye.*

However, for Paley's and our own present purpose, we have simply to look upon the eye anatomically as an instrument of vision[1]. 'It is as evidently intended,' says Sir E. Beckett, 'to look at the watch' (supposed by Paley in his first chapter as an example of contrivance) 'as the watch is intended to show the time.' And it must be observed in passing, that the argument from contrivance has never been really replied to, and is as irrefragable as ever it was. It is no answer to it to say that a stone grows, and a watch does not grow, or to talk of self-existing laws or potencies of matter: these are mere phrases. If the watch were evolved in the course of ages, it would still be evidently intended to measure hours and days, and the intention would imply design, and call for wonder. If the stone were broken it would be ultimately found to be the result of forces which have prepared the world for habitation, and are part of a great design. Self-existing laws and potencies of matter mean that the ultimate atoms to which all nature is reducible (or, at least, must be reduced to serve the needs of materialist argument), adopted a highly ingenious course of action of themselves and in concert, or each for himself with mutual agreement. This is, in fact,

[1] 'Nat. Theol.' p. 29, S. P. C. K. 1875.

a high Pantheism, answering to Virgil's much more sensible speculation that his bees were gifted with instinct by their Maker.

'Deum namque ire per omnes
Per terram tractusque maris, caelumque profundum[1].'

Anybody who can persuade himself that the eye was not intended to see with or the ear to hear with, will probably have no difficulty in denying every article of the vast cumulative evidence of contrivance before him, from the mountain and its watersheds to the herbs which make its meadows glorious. But he is out of reach of common sense.

There is no doubt that what we call Dædal or constructive beauty, or excellence of design, may be unsightly to the eye. The skilfully-exposed muscles and sinews of a dead arm are so, though they display beauty of contrivance. The arm of Hercules or Hebe is beautiful to the sight. In lecturing on this subject a short time back, the writer of this book placed two things before his audience. One was the S. P. C. K.'s diagram of the internal structure of the eye—cornea and iris, crystalline lens, humours and retina, optic nerve, trochlear muscles, all correctly drawn and distinguished by colours. It was a highly interesting and very ugly picture. The other object was a large print or lithograph of the heads of the Dresden Madonna and the

[1] Georg. iv. 220.

Holy Child. Most persons will remember the wonderful beauty of the eyes in both faces, and many living eyes possess a large share of the same quality. Now the diagram possessed, or at least conveyed, a good idea of what we call the Dædal beauty of excellent contrivance; but the picture represented pure beauty of colour and form, and some indefinite thing besides. This inner excellence and outer beauty exist, and are similarly inseparable, in the human eye, ear, teeth, limbs; in all parts and far more in the whole of the human frame; also with varieties of adaptation and delightful aspect in all the parts, and in the whole, of all organized bodies, animal and vegetable; also in the geological structure of the earth, in clouds of the air and pure æther, in and throughout all Nature; on which latter part of the subject we propose to refer to Prof. Ruskin. For the eye[1], it is necessary to distinct vision that an image or picture of the object be formed on the retina or expansion of the visual nerve at the bottom of the eye close to the brain. To this end we have our cornea in front, our crystalline lens (p. 28) behind it (the latter varied in convexity in fishes for the different medium in which they live). We have humours which act in the living telescope like other lenses

[1] See Paley, 'Nat. Theol.' pp. 28-52, S. P. C. K. edition, F. Le Gros Clarke, F.R.S. 1875.

in the inanimate instrument, an achromatic contrivance to get rid of irrelevant colour (p. 35); a contractile iris to exclude superfluous light; a system of muscles to vary convexity of lenses; a binocular contrivance; a wonderfully extended field of vision (p. 44); calculated embedding and packing (p. 46); protection, drainage, and lotion —the latter omitted in fish as needless (p. 48). There is a black pigment provided and spread over the choroid coat behind the retina (p. 51) to absorb transmitted rays of light and prevent confusion of successive images. The nictitating membrane or lubricating and shading veil in birds is of a special or elastic texture, as distinguished from muscular, for convenience of packing and quickness in use. The whole instrument is brought to bear on a certain part of the brain, set apart and endowed with the special function of appreciating what we call light. This is the nerve centre of vision; the eye is but the optical instrument designed to produce a picture on the concave mirror of the retina, and the imperfection either of the nerve centre or the modifying apparatus is fatal to sight altogether.

Now all this and more lay hid behind the dark orbs of Rafael's model for the Madonna. Every one of us has it all, in or very near perfection, and the least interference with it would number us with the blind. The eye not only sees beau-

tifully, but is beautiful. It is as we see it in the horse, the ox, the deer, or the human female.

§ 4. *Expression.*

But the relations between mechanical contrivance and visible beauty become even more subtle and wonderful when we go on to consider the muscular apparatus by which Expression is made to radiate from the eye and its surrounding features. Many persons will tell us, with great sincerity and at no great distance from truth, that expression is or constitutes beauty, of face or countenance, as they are apt to confuse two very different words. We apprehend that a face may be handsome, yet display an evil countenance; but that a *beautiful* face, strictly speaking, combines good expression, or moral beauty, with those charms of form and colour which may depend on youth or merely physical conditions. Moral beauty is indicated by good expression, which is its visible sign. It is delightful to behold, we suppose, just as the full bright organ is delightful, because it conveys the idea of health of mind, and good condition of the soul, as that does of the body. But it must be remarked that if expression does not constitute the whole beauty of the organ, its absence is fatal; some change or play, however slight, is essential to beauty. A dead stare is dreadful in

any eye of any size or colour. It will be seen that every healthy eye varies continually; it contracts and flashes with excitement, or is suffused and shines quietly with internal pleasure or reflection, or it rolls in far-away thought, or reposes between its movements. What we call intelligence of expression is derived a great deal from the subtle correspondence in movement between the eyes and mouth, when the looks change truly with the lips, and aroused attention or feeling makes the eye liquid, as it always does. We delight in it, because it conveys to us the idea of intellectual or emotional sympathy, both highly agreeable things. And here again we must notice, but cannot digress to consider, the great beauty and variety of animal expression as conveyed by the eye. And we must observe that as the inner mechanism of animal bodies, and their outward beauty, immeasurably multiply the force of our argument from beauty or design, so it is further reinforced, and nowise diminished, if we allow that there are curious, and, to us, inexplicable reflections of moral and spiritual qualities in animals. Physically and morally they have resemblances and relations to mankind which are both mysterious and certain. The eye of the falcon, the deer, the dog, and the horse, involve a scale of intelligence and character. Nobody who has ever bought one of the last-

named species can fail to recognize the difference between a vicious eye and a kindly one, or even between the expression of timidity, or of natural gaiety, and the sullen backward look of the misanthropy caused by ill-treatment. We have not space for tales of stable or kennel, shepherding or the sylvan war; indeed, the fearfulness and wonder of the irrational or inanimate creation are as far beyond our understanding as our own inner mysteries. But we can say, that in all alike the mechanism is beautiful in the sense of excellence or wonder; that the natural outside of all is delightful in form or colour; and that in our own grade of creation there steals in something higher, an inner life, 'ultra nervos et cutem,' beyond the physical frame and its veil of comeliness; to which men have given the distinguishing name of Reflection.

The practical and conclusive separation of men from brutes is in this reflective power, which is the basis of morality and personal character, of knowledge and intellectual progress. But there certainly are the oddest outward as well as structural resemblances between different orders of creation. Men are often afflicted with strange likeness to some animal type. And this leads us to a remarkable observation of Sir Charles Bell[1] on expression and its muscular apparatus.

[1] 'On the Muscles of the Face in Man,' p. 95. ed. 1.

He says, 'There is combined in the face of man a capacity for all the variety of expression, which distinguishes the various animals of whose nature he partakes.' And in some cases of demoralization or lowered character, increasing expressions of ferocity or sensuality may confirm this, and might open a strange line of speculation on degeneracy of the human type. But Sir Charles distinguishes the muscles of the face, in particular, into the snarling and orbicular[1]. The former predominate in and characterize the faces of the carnivora, the latter of graminivora. Man has both, and it seems that his expression will vary, and his habit of countenance change, or be altered, according to the use he makes of either[2]. But he also possesses peculiar muscles and fibres, which can be for no other purpose than that of expressing feeling and sentiment[3], as the corrugator supercilii, depressor anguli oris, depressor alae nasi, etc. These Sir Charles makes

[1] Ibid. pp. 131 sqq. ed. 3.

[2] The writer remembers being instructed, at some time of his childhood, that it was proper, on entering the drawing-room, to say the word 'besom' *sotto voce*, because it arranged the mouth pleasingly, by the use of the orbicular muscles, he presumes. Saying the word 'brush' was supposed to have a contrary effect, and 'make one look ill-natured.' It certainly draws out the lower lip, and may produce some expression of self-assertion. Absurd as the instance is, it does point to an infinitely fine mechanism of expression, voluntary as well as involuntary.

[3] 'On the Muscles of the Face in Man,' p. 136. ed. 3.

a chief feature of distinction between man and brute. And he not only speaks with authority as to this special machinery of ours for expressing higher and tenderer feelings, but he says that we express the violent passions which we share with animals by quite different means. However, he seems inclined to make a partial exception in favour of the horse, and names five muscles which account for the superiority of the equine eye 'in spirit and fire, and a kind of intelligence,' and this may probably be traceable to affection or keen appreciation of tender handling, which so nervous an animal must probably enjoy even more than the dog[1].

At all events, Sir Charles Bell almost identifies beauty with high expression: which is very remarkable in an artist-anatomist, and of unspeakable value as a testimony to spiritual beauty. Sturmius, says Paley, held that the examination of the eye was a cure for atheism, and so it may be in curable cases, when it may please God to open the eyes of the blind to Him. But this idea of the mechanism of expression seems to bring matter and spirit into strange contact and contrast; displaying both as realities closely, all but inseparably united, but

[1] It is to be noticed that no animal's beauty is so dependent on what we must call quasi-moral quality, as the horse's. Even in his highly-trained muscular system he expresses great strength subdued to obedience, and excitability tamed by good-will.

one as the intelligible mechanism of the other. The interior mechanism of sight is beautiful, by analogy and from its excellence; because it affects the mind with lofty pleasure in God's work, like to the pleasure of external or visible beauty. This, again, is possessed by the instrument of sight itself. The eye is lovely with form, and colour, and change; with fire and tears. And when we come to examine its more subtle and minute movements and adjustments, we are enabled to see that there is material contrivance, by which it not only throws off physical fairness to sight, but moral beauty indicating the Unseen. Whether half-consciously or automatically, it does look weak or valiant, tender and true, false and cruel, pure or sensual, holy or unholy. Here Beauty not only appeals to man's spirit, as to the wonderfulness of its design and of its Creator, but itself becomes distinctly spiritual. We know a builder by his masonry and a carpenter by his joints; and here, by inscrutable connexion of spirit and matter, we are aware of an Inscrutable Spirit.

Further illustrations of external beauty, as resulting from benevolent design in structure, are supplied us by the works of Prof. Ruskin, and will come in their place after some brief account of his writings, and the landscape school from which his earliest inspirations were derived.

CHAPTER VII.

Earlier Masters of English Landscape.

§ 1. *The Precursors of Turner and Ruskin.*

One of the chief causes (probably the most effective of them) which have given rise to the modern English feeling for Natural Beauty, is unquestionably the rise of the English school of landscape or naturalist painting. This art and poetry have acted and reacted on each other, till their relative share of effect on the public mind may be doubtful. But as painters have generally no time to write, or, at all events, have not kept pace with the poets in literature, literature has credited poetry rather than painting as the great channel of expression for our thoughts of Natural Beauty. It may be so; and our poets' work in that direction has been so well illustrated by Professors Blackie and Shairp, and many other able critics of late, that we wish to confine ourselves to a few remarks on the landscape-painters who have done so much to make England delight in her own hills, dales, and waters, and whose works seem to lead many minds, at least, to reflective and religious delight in Nature. It is well that the Christian public should understand that their

faith may gain some strength by reference to God's work as a sign of Him; and it is well also that naturalist painters should know, that, if they really desire it, their work may and will have its religious teaching for those who will be taught. It is allowed that a school of such men, executing landscape of wider or narrower horizon, has grown up and culminated along with a school of descriptive poetry. The growth of such a school has more interest for us than the career of any of its great geniuses. The love of Nature has taken the place of genius, so to call it, in many of our best landscape-painters. One may say, that if any of them has been asked what his genius, or power in his work, consisted in, he would have answered simply that he liked it very much. That is to say, he had a special enjoyment of certain forms and colours in nature, and a delight of association with natural objects which displayed them: that he observed them, was led to try to represent them, studied his favourite subjects, was led from one to another by his own choice, or even by the public's—and, on the whole, gave up his life to his pleasure in the observation and record of Nature. This genuine naturalism is in fact the essential feature of the English landscape school, which never could have existed without it. Some

national or popular love of nature there must have been, or the humble beginnings of the eighteenth century could never have asserted themselves in the presence of the great workmen of the human form and the human tale. Hogarth and Reynolds studied humanity, in its character or in its beauty; Gainsborough did all things, showing the true delight in landscape, yet not giving himself up to it; Wilson never shook himself free from the traditions of Italian schools; and, like so many of our insular workmen, displayed power and feeling without an ideal. Constable was unteachable, but delighted in sun and rain like a young oak: and he has been something like a fountain of inspiration to the modern French school of pure landscape, now reacting on our own. Croome must have been a sort of elderly male Dryad: and all the powers of all these men, in observation and record, 'inter alia plurima,' became united in Turner[1].

[1] It is worth the while of any person interested in this subject, to pay a few visits to the Water-Colour Gallery of the South Kensington Museum, and observe the progress of the English school in its studies from Nature. Nothing can be more elementary than its beginnings; and when one comes to Brett's Realm of Britain, Johnston's Swineherd, and E. Paton's Waning Year, one certainly gets a vivid idea of the progress of a naturalist school. There is one group in particular—good examples of comparatively unknown names (excepting Varley's)—which should be compared with the early works of Turner, by all who wish to understand his earlier methods, and that in fact

We propose to speak of this great naturalist-painter as representative master of a school of men like-minded. A battle of recriminative criticism continues to rage over his memory, with which we have nothing to do here. He has been called an idealist, and of course he had plenty of ideas: but he derived them all from Nature: they all came from contemplation of God's works, passing across the mirror of his thoughts, and he certainly would have shown the rough side of himself to anybody who accused him of inventing new things without Nature. It is admitted that his works are his true biography[1], and that they fully ex-

they were like other men's, only with a good deal more power. This quiet little constellation, at the staircase end of the gallery, is labelled with the following names—

	Born.	*Died.*
Munn	1773	1845.
Delamotte	1780	1863.
Barker	1776	1836.
Varley	1778	1842.

With them there are fine landscape sketches by Mulready, 1780–1863. Croome lived 1769–1821, Glover 1767–1849. These men were alone a school of Nature, whatever they knew of each other; and with them are Robson, W. Turner of Oxford, De Wint, and all the lately departed elders of our own day.

[1] For real understanding of Turner and his works, Prof. Ruskin is the best authority. Later works add nothing to what he tells us, except details to the disparagement of Turner's personal character, and such deductions from the Professor's tribute as an educated reader can easily make for himself. Mr. Hamerton may be read on the unfavourable side of criticism, and there

press all the higher part of his strange duality. He was, or became, avaricious, and even grasping and unfair in his dealings: his pleasures were sometimes coarse and sinful: he lived in sin with his housekeeper for some part of his life: he did good deeds long forgotten, and the present tendency of criticism seems to be to lower his character and works as much as possible, in the interests of the picture market. In any case he lived his fourscore years without painting an immoral or voluptuous picture: his mind always held great hopes and high thoughts in solution: the early cramping and thwarting of such thoughts by circumstance can never be estimated, any more than the many musings of his graphic poems. There is perhaps only one person left, besides Prof. Ruskin, who was near enough to him in friendship and understanding and varied powers, to speak now with authority on his personal character and belief[1]. His definite profession of religion reduced itself to acknowledgment that school and church were good. He would hardly have said so without thinking so, or thought so without meaning. He seems,

is a very good biography in the series just published called 'The Great Artists.'

[1] I trust that my friend the Rev. W. Kingsley, of South Kilvington, Yorkshire, may allow this reference—perhaps even, at his own time, may throw some light on this subject.

without ever denying the Christian faith, to have fallen into confused and neglectful thought of it, by living, as so very many of his race have always done, without any regular performance of Christian duty. But one thing seems to have remained with him to the last; an uplooking delight in Nature above himself, in which he was absorbed and lost: a delight to him preternatural, or beyond his lower nature: a religion of the beauty of our earth, which he shared with all the best of the Greek race, as well as of his own. Like all these, he looked on his art as an exponent of praise; as genuine expression of man's delight in God's work. To such painters and their proper disciples Beauty is a spiritual element in Nature. If any of them ever took true delight in fields and forests, in mountains and the sea, and owned to awe and thankfulness in painting them, his work had a spiritual side for him, and still has one for all those who will read it as it was set down.

Now, the English landscapists, for about one hundred and fifty years backwards from the present date, are headed emphatically by this great and chaotic personage. None of them were so great as he, most of them were of limited powers; but they seem as a rule to have been quietly happy men. They lived in

the decent conformities of the middle-classes, and in these their own inner life passed by, ingloriously enough to the view of the politician. They seem often to have accepted poverty or narrowness willingly, taking a silent freedom in exchange; knowing with content that they had found work of their own choice, and that when a man labours at what he delights in, he must not expect to be paid as if he worked against the grain. Most of them lived in the profession and practice of English Christianity as churchmen: their study of Nature led them a very different way from Rousseau's or from Shelley's, for this plain reason, that they studied her for love of her, and not for hatred of mankind. They had no political significance, they never protested against the world's contempt, they never blasphemed; they lived to draw from Nature, not to deny her Maker; they found peace in those trances of laborious pleasure, between wondering observation and attentive manifestation, which turn the painter's life into one long vision, in which the world is not as it seems, but something more. They may have had more real effect on English feeling for Nature from the humble way in which they lived; but they were an element in higher education. They worked for the commercial and professional classes

chiefly; though in many instances they did much for, and were kindly regarded by, the country aristocracy in particular. But they were nearly all of them poor enough to be constantly employed as drawing-masters; and in this way all the best of them, each, it may be said, in proportion to his power, became a centre of instruction in Natural Beauty, or, at least, in the love of it. To speak only of those who are gone, many pupils of the late W. Turner, of Oxford, will remember the beauty of his simple and retiring character, and the entire and possessing happiness in Nature, which was his sole and perfect pleasure. The names of De Wint and of J. D. Harding are still cherished, to our knowledge, in Yorkshire country-houses, where the latter studied 'the Park and the Forest,' and met with something, at least, like loving appreciation. These men, too, exercised the greater influence on natural study, because it was their only school, and the more carefully devised and gradual curriculum of the present day was not then formulated. They certainly did not teach their pupils to draw enough from the cast or model; and did not quite understand the real necessity of systematic study from the human figure, as the base of scientific or professional draughtsmanship. They were, in fact, guilty of invent-

ing the British amateur, or he grew up under their guidance; but he and his race would never have understood or cared for Natural Beauty, as Beauty—still less as a thing of God —without them.

Their teaching had special and wide effect on women. Enough contempt, perhaps, has been displayed and inculcated by Dickens and Thackeray for the culture and habits of provincial towns and clergy, and country-houses great and small: though one of the most pleasing instances of the wider and higher view of Dickens's latter days was his growing kindness for working parsons. He was, in fact, a countryman at heart, as well as a Londoner by experience. But provincial or local music-masters and drawing-masters must really have done a good deal for culture, most commonly in feminine education, of course. George Eliot knew provincial England well, and was an excellent judge of music, and she spoke most highly and gravely of the general capacities of the old sort of English country music-teacher, as exceeding, for real choice and execution, the standard of most German Kapellmeisters. It certainly was so, as to landscape, with Croome or W. Turner, or Mr. Burgess at Leamington, or the elder, and younger, and youngest Richardsons in the North. These had often cause for

pleasure, and even pride, in their pupils, and there can be no doubt as to the atmosphere of refinement and content, of vivid or pensive delight in natural things, of lower and present beauty gradually showing itself symbolic of higher and future, which often accompanied such masters' instructions. It certainly did much to form the minds of a large number of people of all classes; perhaps nearly as much as music, since drawing communicates more definite ideas, and leads a good student both to literary work and physical studies of real value. One pupil may take to geology or botany; another may read the 'Allegro' and 'Penseroso:' both will learn something to teach their children.

It was on such a state of artistic culture, unconsciously possessed, and ignored with the contempt of ignorance by public writers, that a certain young Oxford Graduate descended with two volumes of energetic essay in or about the year 1843. It is not unreasonable or unjust to attribute Mr. Ruskin's extraordinary success chiefly to the remarkable merits of his labours: and to what appears to us the fact that he has been specially called, prepared, and endowed for a great work, from which he has never consciously deviated. When he began his career, his works were read with prejudice and angry comment;

they are now praised without being read, or treated as models of style without much regard for their matter. It is therefore desirable, before we conclude this book with a regular comparison between his reasonings and the old Design Argument, to repeat very shortly the theoretic principle of Nature and Art, Beauty and Religion, which he first stated in 'Modern Painters,' and has illustrated and repeated all his life through. He has raised painters into Literature, by showing the spiritual side of their labours. He chose the leading master of a great unconscious school of Natural Beauty, and through him partly succeeded in making the others understand the real dignity of their work. He bid them understand that it was God's work as well as theirs. As a rule, none of them cared for personal dignity or great successes. To an ambitious man there is no success in this country except in politics; it is still true to a very great extent, and was literally so, and with good reason, in the earlier part of this century, when the English race was struggling for existence, and while the wounds of its struggle were sorest in exhaustion after victory. The English painter's life lay low, and he was in fact pretty much where he wanted to be,—left to English Nature. If he could sell a few pictures, and live between that and lesson-giving, it was enough.

He had no dignity, and consented to be called the drawing-master he really was. The only harm this depreciation did him was that he did not always feel what it really is to be a Master of Drawing. Every painter I have known has seemed, at one time of his life or other, to have felt that he really had a God and a soul, and that the rest of the world hardly gave him credit for such conviction, or for any corresponding motive in his work. Yet in their dumb way all these men delighted in God's work, and knew that it was His, had some feeling that He called them to represent it. They were too shy to talk much about that; and everybody knows what sort of reception all such talk of theirs would have met, before 'Modern Painters.' If Wordsworth and the Poets acknowledged them a little, that was the best encouragement they got; and we know how the world criticised 'the Lake Poets' and Wordsworth. In short, it was the making of the English School of Nature to have some confession of Religion publicly attached to their work. Prof. Ruskin said from the first, Naturalist Art is the expression of man's delight in the sight of God's work, and in all representation, record, and discovery of Nature as His work. This is his true device, which never has been changed: and in this confession he has certainly prevailed. It has been

the backbone of his teaching and his true fame, because it has appealed to the strongest and most abiding qualities of all his true pupils. His false students have been many; but all who have followed him for other motives than gain or fashion have realized that this is what made him their leader.

His theory, briefly given, is exactly what has been already asserted here[1]: that the pleasures of Sight (and of Hearing, with which we are not now concerned) are an end or object of life in themselves: that God will not make anything an object of life to His creatures, which does not point to or partake of Himself: that when we see His works gathered and arrayed for our sight, purposely adapted for its pleasures—then we see an immediate operation of the Intelligence which made them, and made us to see them. 'This is the full comprehension and contemplation of the Beautiful as a gift of God:' and these words, written forty years ago, are almost the same as the more recent, but perfectly original expressions, of Dr. Mozley's 'Sermon on Nature.'

§ 2. *Modern Painters, vol. iv.*

It is to be observed, that 'Modern Painters' was not in the first instance intended to bear

[1] 'Modern Painters,' vol. ii. p. 14.

on the Argument from Design. Its motive was to induce the world to do justice to Turner as a landscape-painter. The author had to show that Turner knew more of Nature, and painted her better than anybody else did or ever had done: and to do this he had to induce his readers to educate themselves into a knowledge of the outer phænomena of the earth. Having himself lived all his life in observation and painter's study of Nature, Ruskin starts on his wide knowledge of visible phænomena, great and small. He knows what an Alp is like, and he knows what an Alpine flower is like, having drawn and laboured hard on both. Landscape means all inanimate Nature, corrupt, and fallen, and subject to evil, yet bearing the traces of God's working, and of the time when He pronounced it very good. This gives a certain sacredness to small things as well as great, to its details as well as its masses[1]. This makes minute foreground work on Nature important and valuable, and dignifies William or Holman Hunt's work as well as Turner's. The same supernatural handmark is still on Nature, and it is an

[1] In a note to the Author, Prof. C. Pritchard says: 'If I wrote on Beauty I should take my stand opposite to a flower (I should soon have to take off my hat in reverence)—say an Orchid, or a Primrose, or a Lythrum—that would gradually lead me over their habitations, hill and dale and the river-side, and I should get design in beauty, and in practical perfection of adaptation.'

object in man's life to recognise it. One more brief extract will suffice for Ruskin's view[1]:—

'We shall find that the love of Nature has been a faithful and sacred element of human feeling. That is to say, supposing all circumstances to have been the same with respect to two individuals, the one who loves Nature most will always be found to have more faith in God than the other. The nature-worship will be sure to bring with it such a sense of the presence and power of a Great Spirit as no mere reasoning can either induce or controvert.'

The part of 'Modern Painters' which best applies to our purpose, and should be read carefully and repeatedly by all who are interested in any spiritual argument from Natural Beauty, includes chapters vi–xviii, vol. iv. pp. 32–268. The remarkable[2] Chapter on the Firmament comes first in natural order; and the more so because it in some sense accentuates the difference between natural mechanism and natural dynamics. We cannot, as in human anatomy, say we know all, or much, about elemental mechanism. Nor can we display design in clouds and winds, as in the parts

[1] 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii. p. 306.

[2] The distinction between Paley's argument and Ruskin's may be repeated here—that the first takes his chief examples from natural mechanism directed to life, the other from the structural dynamics of nature as adapted to life.

of the eye; though we are sure of its existence. We do not inhabit the clouds, and cannot speak of their formation as we can of the geology of our earth. Yet they are assuredly so ordered as to minister to our life: and an argument from their beauty might begin with Scriptural language about clouds as God's dwelling-place, the revelation in clouds on Sinai, the cloud of the mercy-seat, the pavilion round about Him with dark water and thick clouds, the cloud seen by Ezekiel, those of the Transfiguration and the Ascension, and the future and final Coming with Clouds, when every eye shall see Him. The great beauty of the firmament, felt as symbolic from the earliest days[1], is universal and visible to everybody, and cannot be evaded. We have seen how the sight of the starry heavens affected the mind of Cicero; and it will be remembered how it recurred to Napoleon, after full atheistic argument from the savants of the Revolution who accompanied him to Egypt. The arctic stars are no less beautiful than the desert stars, and they take up their tale over all intermediate places, over fruitful lands, and crowded cities, and desolate seas. Over all places alike the great sun begins his state, and ends it; in formless inaccessible glory. The phænomena of the Firmament are out of man's

[1] See chap. iv. supra.

reach, but always within his sight. This is not the case with many of the higher spectacles of Nature, so to call them, which can be seen by comparatively few persons, as deserts, volcanoes, even the higher snow-fields and the glacier world. A certain number of competent persons are allowed to see them, and their expressions of praise, to a certain extent, regulate the world's feelings about its wonders. But the sky is a constant and omnipresent source of beauty to all who will look at it; and yet they are saved from the carelessness or weariness of familiarity by its continual changes. We know it is related to our welfare on earth; we cannot explain how or in how many ways. 'It is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and soothing of the heart. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same for two minutes together; almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity; its appeal to what is immortal in us is as distinct, as its ministry of chastisement or blessing is essential to what is mortal.'

It seems undesirable to make any attempt at rapturous description in a book like this. Yet the universal impression of sunrise and sunset should be considered: that wonderful pageant of colour cannot be set forth in heaven before all men for nothing. And it appeals to our

sight quite as forcibly in the desolations of civilisation as in those of Nature. Having observed sunrise and sunset from the Grand Plateau, from Mount Sinai, from Hammerfest, and elsewhere, the writer still considers Westminster Bridge one of the best places in the world to see the latter; and the former is at least powerfully impressive in the city of London. Once or twice in the twenty-four grey hours of darkness visible, and night without peace, there comes forty minutes or so of strange incongruous glory, and all may see it. The exterior of life has been penal and hideous all day, and suddenly, and for a time, it is proclaimed that there is glory and there is rest [1].

We cannot say much, then, about the dynamics, chemistry, or apparatus of the air, but there is no doubt about the salubrity or the beauty of its effects; or that they appeal to our souls or reason, that is to say, that a higher Reason appeals through them. Again, He is admitted, and proved by the structure of language, to have thus appealed to our forefathers, in earlier periods of the Aryan race: so as to have been thought Himself to *be* the sky, or

[1] There is a vignette to the later editions of 'Sister Dora,' by Miss Emily Howard, of sunrise behind high chimneys, from the upper wards of her hospital at Walsall, which conveys grand and pathetic ideas in this tone. The original coloured drawing was very impressive.

personally present in it, or throughout it. And though the structure of the heavens be a mystery, we are none the less sure of a system and purpose in it, to sustain our life. Mystery may be inscrutable without being incredible, and it may be a source of pleasure. 'Man should not be less grateful for the summer rain, or see less beauty in the clouds of morning, because they come to prove him with hard questions.' The present hypothesis of cloud is, we believe, that it consists of spherical globules of water enclosing vacuity enough to suspend them in air: and if this be so, we have arrived at a knowledge of their nature, such as Paley points to in the important caution[1]: 'It may be true, that in this and other instances we trace mechanical contrivance a certain way, and that then we come to some thing which is not mechanical, or which is inscrutable. But this affects not the certainty of our investigation. Up to the limit the reasoning is clear and certain.'

§ 3. *The Firmament.*

But the importance of the argument from external beauty of Nature is greatly increased when its bearing on the language of Scripture comes under consideration. The account given

[1] 'Nat. Theol.' p. 31, ed. S. P. C. K. 1875.

of the stages of Creation in the first book of Genesis, as Prof. Ruskin says[1], is in every respect clear and intelligible to the simplest reader, except in the statement of the work of the second day. It is like a description of things seen in vision; it is the narration of a great spectacle, in language necessarily inadequate. However the earliest sacred writer received the vast impressions of the six periods of creative work, his language had to be human language, adapted not only to the 'state of physical knowledge' at a time when none existed—but adapted to the possibilities of human conception and intelligence. How far these possibilities or powers have advanced up to the nineteenth century is not our affair now. Knowledge has indeed been increased or accumulated: but very little seems to have been gained in power of expression or vividness of impression. The vast and phantom-like ideas of Cosmogony at work, of the phænomena of Creation, can even now only be communicated in conjectural and symbolic words; which, in the language of inspired seers, certainly rise to heights which the nineteenth century cannot equal, any more than Prof. Huxley could write the 19th and 104th Psalms. The imagination strives to realize, i. e. to frame the thought of what some vast phænomenon was like; the in-

[1] 'Modern Painters,' vol. iv. p. 85. Part V. chap. vi.

tellect is contented with facts and mathematics; however vague the language of imagination may seem, a large proportion of mankind will continue to prefer its results; because they convey at least a notion to all minds, and mathematics can do so to very few. It may be a more or less valuable piece of information to learn that the sun is 95,000,000 miles from the earth, but nobody has the least conception of 95,000,000 anything or 1,000,000 either. Whereas, though it is not a literal fact, that 'the sun goeth forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course:' nevertheless there is an unscientific element in man to which such words seem wonderful and glorious, awakening hope for man, for that the sons of men are taught to say such words—as we think, by the Spirit of God.

The much-discussed passage describing the Second Day or period of Creation turns, as all know, on the word Rakia or Firmament, better translated as in the margin, Expansion. God said, 'Let there be an expansion in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God called the Expansion Heaven.' Let it divide the waters below, in their collected or tangible fluid state, from the waters above, in their dispersed or aërial state. In that latter condition, the volume of the atmosphere surrounds the earth, and the unscientific readers,

for whom the Bible was written, had, and have very little idea of the real state of the case. But, as our author remarks, such a person could hardly glance at the sky when rain was falling in the distance, and see the level line of the bases of the clouds from which the shower descended, without being able to attach an instant and easy meaning to the words, Expansion in the midst of the waters. And if having once seized this idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed anything of the nature of clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed divide waters from waters; that is to say, water in its collective state from water in its aërial state: or the waters which fall and flow, from those which rise and float.

This is certainly, an instance in which a remarkably beautiful though frequent phænomenon of external Nature seems to explain one passage in Holy Scripture, and to give us an idea how others are to be understood. In speaking of heaven and the firmament to mankind in general, the sacred writer had to speak to persons who understood nothing of the facts he narrated—himself, properly speaking, not understanding them either. But what he spoke of was real and intelligible, because in one sense or the other, in spirit or with the eye, he spoke of what he had seen.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mountain- and Hill-Sculpture.

§ 1. *Form.*

There are several slight differences between Paley's argument from benevolent design, generally as displayed in animal structure, and Ruskin's argument from benevolent design, as accompanied by Natural Beauty in mountain-sculpture, and its varying results. The term Sculpture, as we shall immediately see, is distinctly applicable to the process by which mountains are brought to their present shape, though that shape is not permanent. What we have first to notice is, that in animal anatomy the structure itself is ugly and distressing to look at, though veiled with beauty when in its healthy working state; while one may say that displayed hill form is always beautiful, and that the bare bones of earth, exposed peaks and ridges, as in the Judæan hills and the higher mountains of the Desert of Sinai, are at least wonderful and glorious objects of contemplation.

But a further difference is very important. Not only is it true that you cannot examine the structure without defacing and destroying the form, but that you hardly injure the effect of scenery by geological enquiry; and further, that the continued changes of natural decay, which take beauty sooner or later from man and beast, minister to its renewal in mountains. Decay is sculpture, and sculpture decay, in these great forms. Their condition is one of perpetual fracture, cleavage, undermining. As in Job's day, 'surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.' So it is; but the lines of fracture still provide for Beauty in their resulting curvatures; and this, as drawn out and expressed by Prof. Ruskin, has occasioned one of the most beautiful passages in the English language, and forms a very crucial and accurate example of the attendance of Beauty on the great dynamics of Nature. The different beds and central peaks all suffer disintegration in their turn; each supplies a different detritus, and furnishes different elements of fruitful soils. Each zone of these has its fauna and flora. But the fractured parts themselves are beautiful in curve and at distance, though violent impact and cleavage produce their forms. The Aiguilles of Chamonix themselves are hewn by storm and frost into exquisite

curves. Rigid as they look to the eye of the chance spectator, if he attempts to draw them he will find that they follow the same laws of curvature, for beauty's sake, as animal or vegetable outlines. 'The forms which in other things are produced by slow increase, or gradual abrasion of surface, are here produced by rough fracture, when rough fracture is to be the law of existence. A rose is rounded by its own soft ways of growth; a reed is bowed into tender curvature by the pressure of the breeze. We could not, from these, have proved any resolved preference by Nature of curved lines to others, . . . but she gives us in these mountains a more clear demonstration of her will . . . If, she seems to say, instead of dew and sunshine, the only instruments I am to use are the lightning and the frost, then their forked tongues and crystal wedges shall still work out my laws of tender line. Devastation instead of nurture may be the last of all my elements, and age after age may only prolong the unrenovated ruin. But the appointments of typical beauty which have been made over all creatures shall not therefore be abandoned; and the rocks shall be ruled, in their perpetual perishing, by the same ordinances that direct the bending of the reed and the blush of the rose.'

Mountain decay, then, is sculpture of beauty.

But we have also to form some notion of the primal forms, or rather, if that be impossible, of the methods of operation by which such natural curving has gone on from the beginning. By the beginning we mean some primitive upheaval, to use the term which corresponds most nearly to the words of the Book of Genesis: 'God said, Let the waters which are under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear.' The earth had been without form and void, unfit for human life, inconceivable to human senses, had such senses existed. There was a time when it assumed a shape, which, if not near its present appearance, was the sketch and the material rudiment of its present appearance. That shape was one which caused and directed the gathering together of the waters, in vast oceans at first, afterwards in varied forms and relations to the land. Such gathering must have been effected by laws of gravity; they must have run together where they were made to run, by gradual or more rapid emergence of the dry land. Some typical forms it must have had of primæval basin and watershed; some such result there must have been as the earth ceased and rested from upheaval and convulsion. Perhaps during that period there may have been no beauty in the human sense; the earth was not then prepared for the children of men, and

no more fit, in fact, to be seen by them, than ready for any other function of their life. The other five periods of creation gave room and time for vegetable and animal growth, and the world was prepared for its coming race, and with that preparation, and in consequence of it, the beauty of the world gradually increased and was perfected for the highest function of man's existence, which is giving rational glory to God with the fullest understanding and emotion of which his nature is capable.

We do not think it necessary to attempt an elaborate answer to a possible question which may here be asked us. Since you say that Beauty cannot exist without the reason of man and its powers of observation and reflection, how could the world have been beautiful before man existed? On our or any religious hypothesis, it was beautiful in the eyes or reason of creatures older and mightier than man, of the sons of God who shouted for joy at the new-made glory of creation. We repeat, that whatever it means 'that God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good,' carries an idea of beauty or delightfulness of aspect. Also, this seems to be nothing more than raising the old question between objective and subjective Beauty. Whether man was there or not, the objects of creation at a certain date were capable of producing or

causing emotions of beauty in him when he got there; and it is suggested that in the minds of higher beings they produced analogous emotions. It may have been the blessing or approval of God which made His work beautiful in the sight of man. 'All these forms and shades of beauty,' says Hugh Miller, of early geological periods, 'which once filled all nature, were created not to gratify man's love for the æsthetic, seeing man had no existence till long after they had disappeared; but in harmony with the tastes and faculties (so to be called with protest) of the Divine Worker, who in His wisdom had produced them all.' What we know of the production or evolution of beauty in mountain structure will certainly confirm us in, and might indeed originate, the thought, that God invested His Creation with this vesture of Beauty in direct symbolism of Himself, and let it remain on a fallen world, in comfort and mercy to feeble creatures seeking signs of Him.

As soon, then, as the dry land was elevated above the waters, the waters ran together by gravity, and gave a first boundary form to the earth. The upheaved substances came under new conditions. Intense heat of their own probably affected them still; but they were now within reach of the atmosphere and its various agencies of change. Rain and lightning would

leave their traces; and as soon as the rising mountains reached the line of perpetual snow, all the armoury of frost would be at work upon them. They began then to be modified, and have continued to be so ever since, by heat and cold, by snow and frost. Beauty resulted all the time from the process, and at one and the same time a ministry was going on to the life and comforts of mankind. This ministry was not uninvaded by terrors and dangers of Nature, just as the beauty of nature was sometimes involved in terror, or changed to scenes of ruin; but as its general purpose was benevolent, that man should live and not die, so its general aspects were for his delight and not for his distress.

§ 2. *Structure and Form.*

We come at length to illustrations of purpose of mountain-structure and resulting beauty. The sculpture of mountains into peaks, ridges, table-lands, banks, precipices, defiles of rivers, began with some original form fair in itself, and its decreed decay carves it into new forms. It provides vegetation, and the soils and climates best fitted for it. The glaciers rasp and grind, and the rivers cut and saw, and lightning and frost hew and split, and gravity and momentum of fall and torrent water carry away the rubbish,

or rather forward it downwards, stage by stage, for fresh formations. Before one can really appreciate the benevolence or the beauty of high hills, it is quite necessary, as Ruskin says, to go to Switzerland and see the vast uplands and sides of high mountains nursed by the detritus of centuries. There one can understand the beautiful interregnum between pine forest at its appointed height, and arable land on lower slopes. A great Alp[1], say in the Valley of the Rhone, consists of any number of fields and recesses, in themselves forming high hills and valleys, and full of wide parks and forests, villages, corn-fields, and vineyards. To understand such happy places, far withdrawn from any world we are familiar with, to appreciate their richness and vastness of scale, the endless variety of form, the way their steep forests stand always in picturesque grouping, trees tossing their arms continually, as it were in gesture, one above the other—they must be seen. If it were only for their falling waters, for the way the mountain slope displays all its little streams in sparkling falls and rushes and pools, the mountains must be seen before their beauty can be estimated.

First, then, mountains are watersheds, and direct the course of rivers—that is to say, they

[1] The word Alp, properly speaking, means only the lower or partially inhabited slopes of a mountain.

command the irrigation and drainage, and settle the communications of the world: in fact, they regulate its history. It has been observed how many cities of commanding interest — Rome, London, Florence, Jerusalem, have a dome and a river—or river-bed, for their leading feature. Navigable rivers have always determined the centres of commerce and learning, and the scene and turns of battle age after age; as smaller streams invite convent, fortress, and hamlet. By degrees, when vegetation is established, and the natural energies of soils (formed by the agencies of mountain destruction) begin to be seen, the charms and pleasant associations of the human dwelling are added to the valley, and the type of perfect landscape fairly established.

But the mountains are not only watersheds, involving all the beauties of the waterfall, torrent, and the higher lake scenery: they are also the reservoirs of great rivers. Prof. Ruskin's sketch of the progress of mountain form, as far as its present condition, amounts to this[1]. It is found that the highest mountains are of the hardest substance, and in a central position, so as to support the thick strata, from which they emerge as lofty peaks, and whose edges form the surrounding lower hills. A decided

[1] See 'Modern Painters,' vol. iv. pp. 173, 4.

slope or watershed from the summits to the sea level was provided by the original upheaval. The centre or highest part of such upheaval would be the hardest, or primary, rocks; and they would first reach the snow-line, and be always in nearest contact with the clouds and upper waters of the firmament, and first exposed to frost and glacial action. Such action in the course of comparatively few years would result in a high central mass of rocky mountain, with lower hills, all covered with snow or thick glacier, sliding or rolling towards the lower ground and warmer climate, and in due time dissolving. The processes would be, that the snow would thaw quickest on the rocks, slide down into ravines, subject itself to great pressure, and form glacier. The glacier would grind down the bases of the highest peaks, and force its way over or through their intervals. The highest peaks would be denuded of snow and ice by successive thawings and slidings; and would be subject to fresh action of snow and frost, which would bring them nearer and nearer to their present condition of cloven ridges or aiguilles. Meanwhile the avalanche crashes, and the glacier grinds on, down the next ranges of slope, and round the minor peaks, which are already splitting into pinnacles and crests of their own. Soon all the

prominences or eminences are disintegrating, always into forms of beauty from the distance of towns and haunts of men. The glaciers go on wearing the mountain bodily down, lapping and flowing round all the higher crests: they form bare smooth table-lands of great extent, and vast basins of their own, with communicating ice-falls; sawing out downward ravines and providing drainage and egress. They establish themselves in lakes at lower levels; and turn at last into rivers, which bear down a large part of the wrecks and detritus of these enormous operations. Finally, the glaciers act with increasing power on lower slopes and softer materials, and their accompanying torrents rush with stronger impetus. The whole hillside comes down to lower level and higher temperature. Consequently the glacier itself diminishes, and at last in great measure disappears, leaving great spaces of rounded rock and moraine, which in due time are clad with vegetation, and become pastures, or Alps properly speaking. The glaciers remain, as they are still seen, in the form of diminished tongues of ice above, still supplied by the upper snow-fields, and maintaining a balance or oscillation of advance and retreat[1], according to snow-fall or other circum-

[1] Discoveries of deserted marble quarries, covered till lately by the Lower Glacier of Grindelwald, and exposed to view by its

stances. These, we believe, are not fully investigated: at all events, no account can be given of them here. But the facts are on all hands unquestioned, that the high snow is a reservoir for the glaciers, and for the great rivers of Europe, and so down to the smaller perennial streams of Alpine pasturage.

Coleridge's poetic intuition served him well, when he asked of Mont Blanc, 'Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?' But the form of the upper mountains, determined by some such processes of intermediate causation as are here described, has its obvious intention or purpose, for the safety of valleys and plains. Health, plenty, free intercourse, commerce, are alike provided for by the great mountain dynamics, over which beauty hovers continually. Prof. Ruskin calls particular attention to the great extent of upper Alpine table-land, partly occupied by glacier and snow-field, between the highest or central peaks and the inhabited valleys. There is a vast plateau, upon which nearly all the great summits stand, 'like children set upon a table, removed far back from the edge, as it were, for fear of falling. The most majestic scenes are produced, not so much by violation of this law, as by

retreat, after about sixty years, are described in a most interesting paper in the 'Alpine Journal' of January, 1882.

one of the great peaks having apparently walked to the edge of the table to look over, and thus showing itself suddenly above the valley at its full height. This is the case with the Wetterhorn and Eiger at Grindelwald, and with the Grande Jorasse above the Col de Ferret.'

Now this is unquestionably an arrangement for the safety of the higher valleys, because it preserves them from continual avalanche and desolation by flood. The upper plateau bears the brunt of disintegration and the battle of natural forces; and the valleys are left, in comparative peace, to the shade of their pine forests and the glow of the rhododendrons. Everybody who has entered on the region of the upper snow has felt what a separate world opens before him as soon as he has crept up the sides of the deep trenches of Zermatt or Chamonix. Once over the shoulders of the lower hills, and their sides vanish with all their pines. This far-withdrawn feeling about the high peaks of course adds to their beauty: they seem almost inaccessible, and yet they appeal in aërial light to races and nations, and under special effects of atmosphere and colour. They are always felt as a direct appeal to the contemplative power. Then, but for the protection which the upper plateau affords, the higher valleys would

be continually raked by falling fragments, and practically untenable; while, but for their continual storage of snow at great elevation, the low country would be flooded in spring and dried up in summer. All the spring avalanches, that is to say, the spare snowfall of a whole winter, are stored so as to keep streams and rivers in moderate continuity all the summer and early autumn. Every pedestrian must have noticed how the glacier torrents rage and swell under the heat of noon, subsiding at night and morning. But if the winter load of the Alps all fell or slid at once into a warm spring temperature in the valleys, they would be depopulated and destroyed once for all; the sudden floods which would immediately ensue would desolate all the plains for weeks, and they would be parched up afterwards. 'The Rhone,' says Ruskin, 'under such circumstances, would be hardly larger than the Severn at Shrewsbury; and many Swiss valleys would be left wholly without moisture. Broken rocks and sliding snow are caught upon the higher shelves and shoulders; they end in softer bands, which clothe themselves with the richest wood, traversed by no falling fragments. The masses of snow above, in a climate neither so warm as to thaw them in the spring, nor so cold as to protect them from the summer's

sun, either form glaciers or remain in slowly-wasting fields to the end of the year: in either case supplying constant streams to the valley below, and to the rest of Europe noble and navigable rivers[1].'

Now, setting aside the theology of the question, the beauty which results from all this is demonstrable by form and colour, to anybody who is sensible of them, which any person may or may not be, in any degree chiefly according to his own will. Take it how we will, purple distances of mountains, crimson reflections of sunrise and sunset, pure white of unlighted snow and its white flame in sunshine—gloomy purple and green of fir-woods, pure green turf, the soldanelle, the gentian, and the Alpine rose—with all manner of indescribable greys and russets between, and all the forms above noted—all this ought to delight every person who sees it, and if any person will not take delight in it, nothing can be done for him. To read of these things is delightful to the painter or observer. And for those who have the opportunity of seeing, it seems a question

[1] Prof. Ruskin's Oxford pupils will remember his pleasing illustration in the Museum theatre, by means of a wooden model, of aiguilles and slopes, which he loaded with powdered plaster of Paris, till it fell in avalanches, and slipped or rolled down in glaciers. He has published the lecture in 'Deucalion,' Part I, p. 48.

of growing seriousness, whether their pleasure in seeing does not involve the duty of bearing witness, and of noting the pages which are set before them thus illustrated.

But in combination with rivers and streams, the mountains are also stores and reservoirs of fresh soil for the valleys. The granite of Mont Blanc is said to contain nearly all necessary elements of renovation: and the process, in fact, involves all the charms of lake and river scenery. The glorious views of the Highlands, of Cumberland and Westmoreland, are all on the path of the waters; so are the wider expanses of Swiss and Italian valleys. It is impossible, without unduly lengthening this book, and that with borrowed information which should be read in various originals, to give descriptions of crashing torrents and precipices, or sweet waters flowing softly among their willows. But this and all the delight and contemplative association of winding and wandering rivers, is connected with the great structural work of rivers, the transfer of soil to renew the earth. Rivers come home to men's understanding and affections more nearly than mountains, in our own country; and there is the less reason for dilating on the beauty which is the complement of all their other blessings.

For transport of soil on the great scale, the

rise of the plain of Lombardy, and the formation of the delta of Venice and Ravenna, are best known to us, perhaps, by inspection or by description. Some geologist might write the Adventures of a Pebble with great advantage to the popular reader, if he would describe the course of one of the rounded stones of the Lombard plain, which alternate with courses of brick in so many buildings on that side of the Alps. Or what a tale may a river-worn bit of granite, small enough to be thrown at a bullock in the Camargue, have to tell of all that happened to it before and after it got into the Rhone from the Arve and the side of Mont Blanc! We think, indeed, that one of Professor Geikie's elementary books on geology starts with the gravel of low-country streams; and for a person who is learning to observe in a flat country, no better beginning can well be imagined.

Two other great utilities of mountain structure remain to be noticed, but little more can be done in this book than explain their existence. First, as to the direction of mountain strata, which alike confine and guide the streams which flow between them, and provide all waters out of the rock and all wells, from those of the desert drift to those of the alluvial soils of Egypt or of England. All the beauty of sight

or association which is connected with the well or fountain, from Rebekah or Rachel to northern village-scenery, is the result of the inner water-system of Nature in her mountain frame. To this we might add all the wonderful cavern-scenery of the world, from the limestones of the Holy Land to our own Derbyshire or Craven. In all these Beauty and wonder go side by side with the Purpose which has designed and prepared the earth for the children of men.

Lastly, the great masses of mountain cause powerful currents of air, which renew the atmosphere of whole countries with cool and freshening elements. The sunny side of a great valley like that of the Rhone becomes a perfect furnace towards the end of an August day, while the welcome shade cools all the air in the other direction. The consequence is strong wind and circulation of air, which is often unpleasantly violent, but without which the valley would be much less habitable than it really is. Of course such changes of temperature and weather as are involved have a varying beauty or sublimity of their own. But they force on us some notice of a less pleasing subject than any hitherto discussed—that of the exceptions to natural beauty and utility, the ugliness and perils of nature; the testimony which all natural objects bear in their maladies and terrors, in the

sometimes formidable, sometimes disgusting appearance which the calamities of their existence bring upon them. Yet it may surely be said that that testimony is of permitted evil, as an interruption to Nature, and that it is accompanied by evidence of general and final good. Also, as has been said before, it is enough for the purposes of our argument, that evil or the working of ruinous forces in Nature is only in part and for a time unsightly. The ugliness results from the temporary disturbance of Nature, and departs with it. Recent fracture or convulsion in a mountain side, or in a forest, may be ugly or grievous to look on; but Nature repairs even such wounds as these in wonderful ways of her own, and fresh growth or weathered colours take the place of intermitted beauty. A fertilizing river may cover some of the fruitful fields on its course with stones and granite-dust; but all of them alike owe their fertility to its waters. Those who wish to follow a great mind through its analysis of the severe or painful, and the hopeful and inspiriting view of physical Nature, will do well to dwell long in repeated study of the last two chapters, called 'The Mountain Gloom and the Mountain Glory,' in Vol. iv of 'Modern Painters.' It is difficult indeed to add to them; and it is satisfactory neither to the author, nor to his best readers,

to quote fragmentary beauties of description without doing justice to his full meaning. It will be sufficient for our purpose if we return to Dr. Mozley's Sermon, and repeat its caution, that though Natural Beauty be a witness to Natural Religion, no man can make a religion of Natural Beauty. Contemplated by one conscious of sin and guilty of his own fault, it and its exceptional terrors are hopeful and comforting. They are symbolic of a great and unknown glory, promised in perfection to a world that lies under the shadow of death and its anticipations. The creature itself is subject to vanity, it earnestly expects, it groans and travails in pains of hope. It has been the misfortune of some of our greatest poets to have ignored the corruption of their own hearts, and the subjection of Nature to vanity and evil. They have sinned, and adored the symbolic Beauty, and sinned again, and writhed under the contrast between the evil that is in them unconfessed, and the glorious vision of outer Nature, in which they seemed to see a God whom they half-confessed. They have justified themselves, not without blasphemy; and when they come to the terrors and severity of Nature, to 'the treachery of earth our mother,' they seem inclined to turn and curse God to His face. Nature is either symbolic of God and of hope, or

of death and of nothing. It is no small comfort to think that the human spirit shrinks alike from pessimism and from nihilism, and to hope that many professors of both may be rescued from their own logic after many days, to accept that hypothesis of hope, without which life would be at the best not worth living, in most cases at least logically intolerable.

CHAPTER IX.

Objections to Argument from Natural Beauty.

There is no doubt that a generation or two ago the Natural Theology of Natural Beauty was little regarded by professors of art, science, or religion. It was not that artists were specially irreligious men, but they saw that their employment and their faith were distinct things, and they had not time or interest to see that connexion between beauty and religious feeling which we may say has been proved and experienced before and since. The fact is, that a wrong notion of Beauty had been formed, and a wrong ideal followed. As in old Greek days, Pleasure, and not true or pure Beauty, had become the object of the professional workman, pleasure alone being what his patrons demanded. The consequence was that men who desired something better, in life and after it, than the gratification of the senses, had often to turn sharply on such representations of Natural Beauty as they found, because

in fact, they were often unfit to be seen. The Puritan mind of Europe, or certainly all over England, saw spiritual danger in all the arts which deal with Beauty; and in consequence adopted something like a deliberate preference for plainness or ugliness. This has in our days been revived by the strange revolutions of the wheel of fashion, and is successfully studied in dress and architecture.

With the two great schools of naturalist observation, by scientific analysis and by artistic contemplation, Nature has resumed her dignity. She may be studied without faith or spiritual hope: the object of this book is to show that she ought to be contemplated in her beauty, to the assistance of faith and spiritual hope. It seems indeed, as Dr. Mozley says, that as analytic study has a certain tendency to look no farther than secondary causes, and deny God even as First Cause, or allow no other account of Him, the mental habit of contemplating and recording the beauties of His works may have been, in His providence, re-awakened in the souls of men His servants, whom He will not forsake, or suffer to forsake Him. But it may be worth our while to attempt a short retrospect of times when the natural sense of Beauty was really, and by the many, considered as ministering to devotion. It certainly was so

by the Hellenic races, simply because they knew no better thing on earth, nothing in nature more significant of the supernatural.

The moral decline and fall of Naturalist Art from their production and use of it was repeated in exact analogy by Christians, who should have known better, in the Cinque Cento. They, like the Greeks, ceased to believe earnestly in the gods whom they symbolized through Natural Beauty, and turned their skill in representation to the service of pride or pleasure. They lost the sight of God in Nature ; but for a time they had strength to represent her with energy and skill as yet unknown, and with an intensity of pleasure, often avowedly carnal, always separated from spiritual thought. Their religion was Nature, they said, and their followers still say so. A keen observer has noted that Nature-worship always ends in an orgie.

So it was, that to all the Reformed Churches, and particularly to the Puritan side of our own in England and Scotland, the whole study of Beauty seemed hostile and vicious. Art seemed against God and against them. No great school of naturalist landscape had yet risen to bear witness of a beauty which cannot tempt to evil, and ought to raise to adoration ; all art seemed to them leagued with error in doctrinal theory, and with sin in daily conversation. So it must

have seemed to Cromwell, and those who dispersed Charles the First's gallery; and this feeling extended over the Puritan world. The Dutch school had one great merit at least, that it preserved the skilful practice of oil-painting, and kept alive all the Northern interest in it, though in comparatively uninteresting subject and very low keys of colour. It was felt to be harmless, or at least not seducing; its coarser work of gambling boors and pothouse quarrels passed for rough jesting and for nothing more; evil in such forms was not felt as tempting anywhere in England or Scotland, and they were tolerated. It is a fine touch of that unconscious power of historic detail which makes half the interest of Sir Walter Scott's novels, that the Lord Keeper's gallery, in the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' consists entirely of portraits, with the exception of a few 'Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then called.' No attempt at Beauty for its own sake was allowed the painter, and all the dress, furniture, and entourage of life, was ordered, not without a certain inherited good taste, or fitness of purpose-like make, but with careful avoidance of any lust or pleasure of the eye. Northern ascetics were generally hard workers and schemers, living and labouring in open air, in wild trying climates, and in war. Habitual

fasting from plain meat and drink was not possible for them, and they had seen or heard enough of monastic rule, and felt the dead hand of organized asceticism. They found a field for discipline and mortification in the lighter powers and airier pleasures of the soul. They denied themselves in spirit, mirth, imagination, and colour. Man was made to till the ground, and have dominion, and strike down God's enemies; not for loves of shepherd and reaper, or sentiment about happy harvest-fields, or pictures appealing even to such sentiment. Nature was under curse, and not good: why should man cultivate transports about her? Joy virtually was not, and was not wanted.

The great protest against this view is in Milton's L'Allegro, Il Penseroso[1], and Lycidas. Those who wish to understand how the English mind has always and all along enjoyed the nature of the English land will do well to learn these poems by heart. Their classical proëms are a quaint instance of Renaissance armour of learning borne lightly on Northern shoulders. Milton breaks out of it, like David, when he remembers a sunrise in Bucks or an Oxfordshire hay-field. Classics are good, but not to express home joys or sorrows. Pleasure of home and lament for the dead come best in the English

[1] Published 1645, four years before the death of Charles I.

vein; the insular melancholy knows itself best at home. Milton's testimony is of particular value, because it may be compared with Izaak Walton's, and between them they prove that the innate English love of country landscape was as strong in the Anglican as in the Puritan mind. Few passages are more genuine or pathetic than Walton's quaint notion of earthly content in days by Shawford-brook, and seeing the sun both rise and set. Two things might have seemed probable enough to any contemporary artist: one, that a nation which could so delight in, and describe its own scenery, would find time to paint it some day; the other, that a race essentially Christian, much musing on natural objects, would see and assert all reasons for giving glory to God in them.

Milton lived to repeat the witness of Creation to God in the hymn of Adam and Eve in Paradise. 'These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good.' But his time and the succeeding generations, to the Revolution and the Empire, were not days for contemplation on the Christian Theoria, of art or religion. This had to be pursued by the unknown succession of quiet painters, and by poets who called no great public attention to it, until Wordsworth began to be heard. Something has been said of this; and now it only remains to speak of the important lessons

of the painter's work for his sake, and to magnify his office as a spiritual pursuit. Very many painters, we think, would gladly think thus of their work, if the public would let them,—if it would receive it as they in their hearts mean it. If the world could feel the true meaning and purport of naturalist art, the artists would feel it twice as well as they do; they would better understand the value and dignity of their own function, and have reason for greater content and happiness in their work. Some recognized share in the world's teaching would be offered them; some consolation for want or delay of success in the markets of their day would be open to them.

Art is, in fact, the human record of Natural Beauty, for all beauty is practically derived from Nature, and discoverable nowhere else, for the purposes of the artist. Every critic and workman (except, we believe, a very limited number of agnostic amateurs, who prefer 'arrangements' and tunes in colour, and prohibit ideas) finds Beauty in Nature, and from no other quarter. That which is unnatural is ugly. All that is fair is so by natural law, which it only takes skill and practice to develope and explain. All that we admire or delight in shows Divine handiwork; the admiration and delight is a message to us, the reasoning of a Reason with

us. It seems most desirable that all that large number of persons who are employed in various forms of observation and imitation of nature should feel that their function is at least as lofty as they like to make it. Painters and sculptors really have souls, and are, as a rule, fully alive to the fact. If they could feel themselves recognized as bearing witness to the human soul concerning its Maker, they would be much happier in their work; they would be on much happier terms with all the believing public; and, what is much to their purpose, they would probably find themselves asked to treat greater and loftier subjects. They would find the timid demand for landscape, because at all events it is harmless, grow into desire for pictures of the scenery of history and of monumental relics, places and traces of God's dealings with man in the past.

But at present Art, or the practical science of Natural Beauty, which is what it really is, is allowed to take other directions; any direction it pleases. It is separated from all its higher function of testimony to the human spirit. The painter has nothing to teach, and is only dubiously amusing; he is supposed to be scarcely as useful to the human soul as a pupil-teacher in Grade 1. He is full of thoughts which nobody cares for; his language of form and colour is

only half understood; and most of those who do understand his technical language care for nothing but it, and will not listen with their hearts to what he would like to say with all his. Can we any of us wonder that many of our artists are disturbed in mind and discontented even with success, very silent on religious matters, and that almost all are more or less good-natured cynics? Public opinion will have it that their work is all of this earth, earthy, and they feel it is nothing of the kind. No place is found for them in the Christian army; and they ought to have one, which the remarkable argument of Dr. Mozley really points out to them, and the writer of this book desires to join in proclaiming.

There is no need to say much here of the alternative view of Nature and Beauty and the human record of both. We are forced to say that we seem to see the evil choice of the old Renaissance made over again by a good many poets, painters, and critics. They are without God in this world, and they will discuss all things without Him, including Beauty. Consequently she presents herself to them only as pleasure, and as pleasure in what you please. This has resulted in dogmatic immorality, and the demand, on all sides of Art, for excitement at any price. In this demand Nature and Beauty are at once lost sight of; they are not intoxi-

cating enough, and they have to give place to passion and intensity. Or else the commercial side of Art occupies men's minds and lives, and fashion and mechanical multiplication hamper invention, and bring good ideas to the level of the crowd, not *vice versa*. Now and then the world is weary of imposture and immorality, and is roused to declare, not that it has lost sight of Beauty by its own fault, but that there is no such thing as Beauty at all. Thus did the Scottish philosophers discuss the subject, little to the satisfaction of their higher Platonists, such as Prof. Blackie. This is the meaning of the public suspicion of Æstheticism; the word, if not the thing, has been coupled with immorality.

Still there is a way of return for all from vicious taste and vulgar choice. It is a return, and in fact a repentance; and consists, not in losing faith and denying Beauty, but in going back to Nature where Beauty is to be found, as of old and ever new. And now that so much good teaching is within all men's reach, it is not too much to say that Nature ought in most cases to be studied by practical delineation, if a man means to get new ideas from her, or to lay an original hold on external physics. There is no critic like Prof. Ruskin, because there are very few draughtsmen like him. The popular æsthetes of our days are seldom practical workmen. If

they would acquire skill to make a few studies in colour from natural objects, their fine melancholy might often change to as tuneful a cheerfulness; the atmosphere of their spirits would change and freshen, as in Mr. Lang's delightful sonnet of transition from the 'plaint of low lutes' to the Odyssey. Those who really wish to enjoy things beautiful had better learn form and colour in earnest. Such scales will fall from their eyes, and such daily pleasures of sight open before them, as they little know of,—but they must learn to see.

It is a pity, that so much feeling for the beautiful as certainly exists in our younger generation should run to waste as it does. It was not given for waste, but for witness. As to artists, their future, like other people's, will be as they choose it. Art, or the quest of Natural Beauty, may be useful in ministering to religious faith, and can desire no higher office than that usefulness. But faith is necessary to the existence of all art that is worth having, as it is essential to any life that is worth living. Without it, Nature and Life lose their significance, and the human record is deprived of sense: a hieroglyphic scroll in fair unknown signs, in a tongue no man can understand.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF NATURAL BEAUTY.

A point has been reached at which we may claim to have proved, i. e. to have shown a strong case for believing,—

That visible Nature has always led mankind to consider the Invisible and Supernatural (or Preternatural, according to the sense in which the word 'natural' may be used).

That visible Nature represents the design, or a small part of it, of a Living God; and that that design includes our welfare.

That Nature does this by enabling man to observe, in the world exterior to himself, and in himself,—

(*a*) Structure—as through Paley and scientific analysis, of which Paley gives a sufficiently accurate account.

(*b*) Beauty—as in immediate form or colour, or through Art.

That Nature evolves Beauty in a wonderful manner as a result of her own operations, and that Beauty is in itself mysterious.

That the emotions of awe and pleasure attendant on such mystery are facts or mental phænomena, agreeing signally or conclusively, not only with the Theistic hypothesis of a Living Creator, but with the further Christian revelation of His Infinite Love for man, and near relations with Himself vouchsafed to man in the Incarnation.

Hitherto we have tried to show that the Theistic hypothesis is the only one which can carry the facts of Natural Beauty: we now speak as Christians, and note as briefly as possible, that our Revealed Theology bears on the subject; and with a singular coincidence with the highest secular, ethnic, or simply human speculations which have ever been made about it.

This is a theological question, separate from the thesis and matter of the Essay here concluded. But the Author is happy in being able to refer the reader to two excellent summaries of the subject: one in the Sermons of the Rev. Stewart Holland, lately published; the other in the absolutely exhaustive first Bampton Lecture of the Rev. P. Medd, which will probably be in the hands of the public nearly as soon as this essay. The briefest summary of leading points is all that can be given here.

There are three passages in the New Testament which before all others set forth the Creative Function of the Son of God. It is set in the forefront of His Revealed Titles and Dignities; the first thing which is shown to man, in St. John i, concerning Him, after His being with God from the beginning, is that all things were made by (or came into existence through) Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. To this it is added in Col. i. 15,

after rejoicing statement of the doctrine of Redemption, that He Who redeemed us is the Image of the Invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for in Him all things were made, all things were founded through Him, and for Him[1] were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible. And the first verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews repeat these words of the Son, *δι' οὗ καὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησεν· ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ.*

These passages, with others, seem to direct us to compare the ideas of Christ as Creator, and as the Image, Instrumental Agent of Creation. They would imply that Nature is made after the antitype forms or images of the Divine Mind. These are speculative terms, but they represent realities: agnosticism we apprehend consists in the determination that these and like words cannot have, and shall not be allowed to have, any corresponding realities. They are there for those who will hear them. To the Christian, they will certainly give authority for all which has been said here of Natural Beauty, as the trace or handmark of a Divine Creator; as resulting from a Nature which is His, at her work; as evolved from her work to the delight of every one who will recognize it, as deniable

[1] The preposition *ὑπὸ* is not used in these texts.

by those who will deny it. And to the Hellenist Christian (and by Hellenist we mean simply a man who has read the Greek classics from Homer to Plato, and remembers enough of them) these texts will open important lines of thought concerning the great lights fitfully granted to Plato. That Beauty is a reflection of His Nature, and a means of conjecture about Him by which even hypothetical knowledge can be gained, is momentous to every one who thinks it worth while to conjecture of Him. But that the central thinker of Greece, and of all unrevealed thought, should have seen, by working at the meanings of popular terms, that Beauty was the same quality or nature in all things, and that quality so excellent as to be of God, and a way for man to God,—this gives us an idea of uncovenanted guidance on God's part and of assisted search by the better heathen which may be no small comfort to those who think of them as once living men, and seekers after God. 'He hath made of one blood all nations of men,' saith St. Paul, 'for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation—that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.'

THE END.

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